

THE Harbinger of Light. A MONTHLY JOURNAL

DEVOTED TO

ZOISTIC SCIENCE, FREE THOUGHT, SPIRITUALISM
AND THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

2260 "Dawn approaches, Error is passing away, Men arising shall hail the day."

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A CONSIDERABLE portion of our space is occupied this month with matters bearing upon the relative value of the Spiritualistic and Occult theories to account for certain phenomena. Several other communications have reached us on the same subject, which indicate that our correspondents' minds are actively exercised upon it, and in most instances desirous of establishing the supremacy of their particular view. For our own part we are only anxious for the supremacy of Truth, and are ready to give up any theory we hold as soon as another is presented which commends itself to our reason as better and covering the ground more thoroughly than our present one. For this reason we are seeking for ourselves and our readers all the light we can get bearing upon the important subject of man's future state and spiritual dowers. Our Occultist friends profess to *know* absolutely the truth on both these matters, whilst the Spiritualist only knows what his experience and that of others who have investigated in the same direction, has revealed ; but as a rule he is a *Free-thinker*, and as such indisposed to accept anything on authority, hence the very assumption of such authority makes him suspicious of those who assume it, and causes him to demand undoubted proofs from them before he acknowledges their claims, Therefore, when their dictum is diametrically opposed to his experiences, limited though they be, it is not to be wondered at that he should reject, and in some instances ridicule, that which from his standpoint appears unreasonable and untenable.

Spiritualists and Theosophists are in unison on many important points ; they are working together for the dispersion of ignorance and the advancement of humanity physically, morally, and socially, the main point of their divergence being the nature of the future life. The

Occultist asserts that it is subjective, and that the Spiritual "Ego" does not and cannot communicate directly with humanity, nor is even conscious of what is transpiring in the world ; they do not deny the phenomena called Spiritual, but attribute it to the *reliquæ* or slowly dissolving physical qualities of the personality bereft of the essential spirit, or to a low order of spirit, called "Pisachas," i. e. devils, and lastly to "Elementaries" (sub-human spirits). The Spiritualists, on the other hand, are quite unable to reconcile this with their experience ; they find the intelligences communicating with them invariably asserting that they are spirits, giving proofs of identity, exhibiting affectionate sympathy, and a knowledge distinct from and often transcending that of the human interrogators ; they consult the records of those more advanced in science or intellect who have investigated in the same direction, and everywhere finding corroboration of the central fact of their experience ; they are constrained to reject the Occult theory as untenable. The interview we have recorded with the spirit "Peter" will be found interesting by many, and especially to those who have met him either at Mr. Spriggs' séances here or at Williams's in London. Peter has been personally alluded to in the *Theosophist* as a "Pisacha," but all our intercourse with him was out of harmony with the character, as we had always found him truthful, consistent, and obliging. We therefore gave him at his request an opportunity of justifying himself and establishing if he could his right to be considered a spiritual entity. The interview took place at our private residence (where we have never met Peter before), with only the medium, reporter, ourselves, and a country friend present. Within three minutes of our sitting, Peter greeted us in the direct voice, and when he had finished, the clear, melodious voice of the Indian, Skiwaukie, rang through the house and was heard by all on the premises. Peter was not, by all accounts, nor is he now, a highly intellectual person, but in a matter of *fact* this is not essential. In a court of justice the evidence of an intelligent peasant or workman of good repute is equal to that of a nobleman or scholar when dealing with simple facts of their experience ; and in this light Peter's testimony is as good as that of the most intel-

lectual spirit that ever communicated. There is one particularly noticeable feature in his statement that may throw some light on the difficulty, that is in reference to the subjective state he and others pass into when resting from their labours. It would appear to us that this is the state called "Devachan" by the Occultists, who assume it to be the normal condition of spirits. It has been pointed out to us by an intelligence who professes to have been one of the earlier "adepts," that they, when investigating spiritual things, are in an abnormal state, and liable to err in relation to more material conditions; but of this more anon, we simply present the case for the consideration of our readers, and may have occasion to enter more fully into the subject further on.

By the liberality of Mr. H. J. Browne we present to our readers an eight-page supplement containing his recent lecture on Christianity: its Origin and Esoteric Meaning. To those who have not read Dupuis and other works on the connexion of Christianity with solar worship, Mr. Browne's lecture will be somewhat startling as it tends to show that whilst there is no reliable historical evidence of Christ's life and work outside of the New Testament, there is ample basis for the construction of the life record attributed to him in Egyptian mythology. The fact of there being no historical record does not, however, disprove his literal existence, for the Jewish historians of the day were generally of the priesthood, who would ignore his pretensions, and probably decline to record his work. To us it matters little whether Jesus was a real or ideal character. We have only to deal with the teachings attributed to him, and many of these are very beautiful. Divested of the dogmas that have been built on them, they are in entire harmony with Modern Spiritualism. Though the man Jesus be destroyed, the ideal Christ will live in the minds of men to their spiritual profit, for many generations yet to come.

SPIRIT COMMUNICATIONS.

FIFTEEN years ago a few thoughtful people who had satisfied themselves of the basic facts of Spiritualism associated together with the view of opening up and maintaining periodic intercourse with the spirit-world, their object being the spiritual development of the circle—the acquisition of knowledge and enlightenment for themselves, and the diffusion of the latter amongst those whose minds were fitted to receive it. A chain of communications soon opened, principally by automatic writing, both by hand and planchette, and subsequently by spirit writing, which were developed. Some of the written communications were published in the early numbers of the *Harbinger*, but the trances addresses not being reported for a considerable time were not preserved. Occasionally, however, a regular series were available, and a number of M.S. containing lectures and discussions on spiritual and other scientific subjects have accumulated, to which it is desired doubtless to give publicity. The series selected for publication were given during the years 1881-2: the first of them professedly by the spirit of the late John Edward, D. R. S., who when in the body was personally known to one of the oldest members of the circle, the identity, however, of the intelligence who dictated the matter which we intend to publish is of little moment; the communications must be judged by their intrinsic merit, which cannot be enhanced by authority.

MOTION AND EQUILIBRIUM.

DR. E.—In my last communication I spoke of motion not as a factor in external nature, a something super added to matter, but as change of position. Motions are therefore changes of position by which atoms or masses acting in accordance with a general law of the universe tend to assume a state known as equilibrium. Thus if a stone be dropped from a height towards the earth, it changes its position until it comes to rest upon the surface of the earth. It is then in a state of stable equilibrium. There are two forms or states of equilibrium, the stable and the unstable. Thus, if a coin be placed upon the flat surface of a table, it is in a state of stable equilibrium, but if the coin be placed in an upright position and an impulse be given to it, so long as it is in motion—that is so long as it maintains an upright position—it is in what is called a state of *unstable* equilibrium, the unstable equilibrium being maintained by the force of opposition or resistance to the attraction of gravity, but as soon as the energy is spent (not destroyed, for nothing that has ever existed can be destroyed, for its equivalent will be

found there in heat; it is only a transmutation of force); the coin will, after a few oscillations, lie at rest upon the table. It has regained its former state, that is, the attraction of gravitation having overcome the force of resistance, it is again in a state of stable equilibrium. If the coin be placed slightly over the edge of the table, it will gradually move nearer to the edge, and will be ultimately lifted by an invisible power from the edge of the table, and by movement, that is change of position, lie at rest upon the earth. The force of attraction no longer acting *through* the table, has reached over the edge of the table, and the mutual attraction which exists between masses has drawn the coin to the edge until finally like the stone it lies at rest upon the earth. Now, it seems that the movements or changes of position are altogether in the stone or in the coin. Not so, for in reality the earth makes an upward though imperceptible movement to meet both the coin and the stone. The attraction between the masses is proportional to the weight of their respective masses, and the force of attraction inversely as the square of the distance between; also the equation of movement is proportional to the weight of the masses, and by this equal movement equality or equilibrium is maintained. A stick of pencil placed upon its major axis, that is in a perpendicular position, is in a state of unstable equilibrium; even though there is no external impulse, either from movement or a current of air, after a longer or shorter period the pencil will topple over, and if like the coin near the edge of the table, will after a few revolutions on its axis, come to rest, like the coin and the stone, in a state of stable equilibrium on the earth. This law holds good throughout the universe. The force which holds the earth in its orbit round the sun and the stars in their places is the same which holds together every atom in nature organic as well as inorganic. These are very simple but very beautiful illustrations of the law of equilibrium. One or two more illustrations will suffice for the present. A human being in an upright position is in a state of unstable equilibrium, because any impulse which cannot be resisted will cause a change of position with regard to the earth, and by being brought lengthwise on its surface the human being is then in a state of stable equilibrium. Equal weights on a weighing-machine beautifully illustrate unstable equilibrium, because the equilibrium can be by the merest change destroyed. The equilibrium of instability is not in existence there by the force of attraction, but by the force of opposition or resistance. The solid earth is in a state of stable equilibrium; the waves of the ocean are in a state of unstable equilibrium.

There are two forms of stable equilibrium, and also two forms of unstable equilibrium. They are the mechanical and the chemical. The stone, the coin, the pencil, the upright position of the human being, are all examples of mechanical instability; the earth in its movement round the sun, the planets, and satellites of the solar system, and all machines in which there is precision of movement are examples of mechanical stability as for example—a clock, a watch—whilst a rifle, a cannon, and any machine upon whose action you cannot absolutely depend are examples of mechanical instability. Water is an excellent illustration of chemical stability; the atmosphere is also an excellent example of chemical instability. All explosive compounds—dynamite, powder, and so forth—are examples of chemical instability. I think that I have now said sufficient regarding these two forms of equilibrium, so that when I apply them either in the abstract or in the concrete form to the human organisation you will by the law of analogy be enabled to understand.

For the same purpose I will give a few examples of the law of impression. If an object be pressed against a hard polished surface, and then breathed upon, if the object be withdrawn, the moisture evaporates, and the image of the object will be plainly seen. After a time, through the closest scrutiny cannot reveal any trace of the image, yet if breathed upon again a phantom image of the object will appear. If the surface be carefully preserved, months, even years afterwards, breathe upon it, and the phantom image will appear. If you gaze for a short time at the setting sun, and then close your eye,

lids tightly, an image of the sun will be distinctly seen, indeed as clearly that many details which had escaped your observation may be fully scrutinised. But as I said at a previous sitting, the sun you have never seen, nor the moon, nor the stars, nor the earth upon which you tread—never seen each other's faces, no, not even the members of your own body. Upon the ethereal waves of motion are impressed, by what are termed longer or shorter waves, the extension of bodies, the groupings of atoms, these waves causing vibrations of the optical nerves; what are termed the peripheral centres gather some of them up, and throw an image or images of objects upon the retina, which by a number of sensations in circle movements, that is spiral movements, are transmitted to the brain, and impressed upon the soul, which gathers a number of these impressions up, and transmutes them into a consciousness of external forms. Objects visible and invisible impress each other without contact. It is well known that near parts of machinery visibly impress each other, and on the walls of apartments are photographed the lives of the inmates; not only every action within these walls, but even their mental presentations, the phantom forms of their thoughts. An invisible witness, this law of impression; an invisible eye which sees, an invisible hand which records the good and the evil of mens lives. Ah, the story of the Recording Angel was not all a myth. How much knowledge of the hidden action of the forces of nature is veiled in the myths of ancient peoples. It was a transient glimpse, a vague knowledge of the impression which mind will receive from mind through matter, that made the matrons of ancient Greece and Rome fill their apartments with beautiful statuary, so that their children might resemble the gods in form. This law also holds good throughout the universe. No atom ever approached another, but each impressed its form upon the other, and under suitable circumstances they might be drawn forth in inverse relation, that is, the last first. No wave of the ocean has ever approached the shore, but has borne away impressed upon its surface a picture of the scenery around. In the retina of a dead man's eye are imprinted the myriad objects he saw in life, the many human forms which passed before his vision. Some may be seen standing out as it were on the foreground, softened and beautified by the halo which surrounds them. Those, doubtless, he loved and venerated. Others harsh and distorted; those he feared or hated. In that small space the fixed staring lustreless eye, is written the story of his loves and sorrows. How easily from them might we read the history of his life. But oh, how much more vividly they are impressed upon the soul. This law beautifully solves the mystery of inheritance. Ages of ancestral experiences registered by the law of impression enable animals and insects from the moment they are ushered into the world, to co-ordinate their movements to definite ends for the preservation of their existence, for the welfare of their being. In their inherited organisation were registered all those ancestral experiences which give them those powers they display at birth.

These laws may be plainly traced in the history of nations, also in the physical, anatomical, and pathological as well as psychological characteristics of races, both in their moral and intellectual development. It is the accumulated forces of centuries which have petrified into the stationary civilisation of the Chinese. For ten centuries they have not altered; the same spare outline of form, large osteological development, yellow skin, straight hair, and almond-shaped eye. His god of a thousand years ago and more is his god of to-day; the same patient untiring industry, the same immense perseverance; the same reverence for those above him. The Chinese nation is mentally and physically in a state of stable equilibrium. They must change, or be destroyed.

For many centuries the Hindoo has not altered. His god, his Buddha, of a thousand—aye five thousand years ago, is his god, his Buddha, of to-day. The same cringing fawning humility, the same treachery, the same hopelessness of caste. He has in nowise altered; the nation is in a state of stable equilibrium; they must change, or be extinguished.

Man has a tolerably defined knowledge of the action

of these laws on nations, but of their action or modes of action on individuals he knows but little. Of the attraction of gravity which holds the earth in its place to the sun, of its existence between all bodies, and that it binds the solar system in its place he knows; but of the attraction which draws one atom to another, or which forms a cluster of atoms into a molecule, he has but little knowledge indeed; but of the internal forces which hold together, first the physical organism, and then the spiritual, he is yet in complete ignorance, and it will be for me I trust to be able to anticipate some of the discoveries of Science, and to show how the same laws which govern concrete phenomena equally govern the physical and spiritual organisation of the human being at our next sitting.

HISTORICAL RESEARCHES ON MAGIC,

From the French of Baron Dupotet; translated by
C. W. ROHNER, BENALLA.

WHY all these fears and apprehensions; why all this secrecy? Is it all a vain thing and a lie? Is there any need of hiding his ignorance or trickery? But before throwing out any suspicions or accusations, it is necessary to understand and to know. With regard to myself, I am free from any fear of the gods; I am not afraid of risking my life; I never had a master, no oath is binding me; free like a bird I can roam about at my own pleasure; I can speak of nature as I feel her, and as she reveals herself to me. Nevertheless, an inner feeling warns me and tells me that I am doing wrong to touch upon these matters. I do not know whence this feeling arises, and what gives it to me; possibly it may be inspired by what I see people practising in magnetism, by all those barefaced charlatans who pollute the truth, who soil the truth by exhibiting her in her nakedness on the public stage before the eyes and ears of the profane crowd. Nothing ever appeared to me so contemptible; and I say to myself, how would it be, then, if I were to reveal still greater mysteries to these unworthy men? What use would they make of them, great God? A fear overcomes me when I write or speak, for the bridle which holds me back in my confessions and demonstrations is not held in the hands of many persons, and truth may become dangerous if placed in the hands of certain people. If I listen to the voice which speaks in my soul, if I pay attention to the warnings of my conscience, I hear these words: leave undisturbed both souls and bodies, do not step beyond the limits of time, travel alone in the path which thou hast discovered; men of intelligence will soon follow thee; wait until their feelings have been stirred up, and until the seed sown has germinated in their hearts; let the men of science say and think what they like, they are far from the truth, their judgment is of no account; but especially keep clear from bold and daring men; they are the dangerous rocks ahead.

I was obedient to the clamour of this voice with great docility, and nothing until now has prevailed on me to hasten my steps.

The science of magic is based upon the existence of a mixed world, placed outside of us, but with which nevertheless we can enter into communication by the employment of certain processes and practices.

The field is vast, there is room for all ideas, for all conjectures, and, we may also say, for all dreams and reveries. The simple man believes in this world of spirits; the *servant* rejects it as one of the greatest errors of past times; the profound and honest thinker is led to this belief by an earnest examination of the facts of nature and of himself.

All ancient religions make it a duty to us to believe in this world of spirits. Our nurses who have rocked our cradles have planted in our soft brains the germs of all the badly understood ideas about this invisible world. Who amongst us has not trembled before he became perfectly assured about the extent of evil he might bring upon us? People advance in life by gradually and slowly throwing off what is called prejudices and errors; the writings and traditions of the past are rejected; doubt

is cast upon this marvellous world, which our senses, in their cold and habitual exercise, can neither see nor handle. Everything appears to us imaginary, but we on our part are delighted with it.

Ghosts, in the opinion of *esprits forts*—strong-minded people—are nothing else but poor devils badly advised, whom we always detect in *flagrante delicto* of imposture. The souls of the suffering, the *ignes fatui*, are only emanations, exhalations, phosphorescent lights, rising from decomposed bodies; in short, things natural, which if closely examined are at once recognised what they are, and what they are worth. The *esprits forts* have an easy game of it, for certainly very gross interpretations are often mixed up with these things; but they unfortunately confound and misapprehend in their unbridled contempt facts of a particular order which have remained hitherto unexplained, and which facts, if nature or science were suddenly to reveal them to these strong-minded *savants*, would stupefy them with their striking reality. These phenomena of an elevated order have for cause the existence of an unknown force—a force not less real to us than the electricity in our vicinity—which makes the earth tremble—a force which, if in activity in our vicinity, soon agitates and shakes our innermost being, makes our hair stand on end, and fixes our eyes in their sockets immovably, our mouths stand open without being able to utter the least sound, the blood ceases to flow in our veins, and we feel as if life was altogether leaving us.

I smile at the sight of these brave and intrepid champions, who at a safe distance from danger speak with a loud and firm tone of voice; they reason glibly upon what they know without taking the slightest notice of other people's knowledge. Quite ready to dash themselves against unknown elements, they get angry and vexed that they are not challenged to mortal combat. These same men, however, soon get weak in a close and heated atmosphere; their senses become enlarged and their comb rises only in cold regions and temperate latitudes, but the slightest shocks their vessel receives render them irrecongnisable, and deprive them of their courage. But what does this matter, it does not enlighten them; they are unable to imagine that we are depending on the medium in which we live; that everything which changes or modifies this medium at once changes our mode of being, and that to judge of the unknown as we judge of what is known to us, leads to exposure and false judgments. I am not endowed with sufficient spirit to rectify the erroneous position of these *esprits forts*; and besides, of what use would it be? I do not see the necessity for it. Let them keep their doubts, as we shall adhere to our living and sincere faith. But let us return to our task.

There is around us in space an agent different from all the known forces; its properties and virtues have no analogy with the dead forces which the science of the schools has succeeded in discovering. It is this agent which furnishes the element of our life, which sustains it for a time, and which receives it again when its term of disengagement from the fetters of matter has arrived. Our inspiration, our knowledge, our intelligence, in fine, is derived from that agent. Between it and us there exists a constant mutual attraction, an unknown affinity and relation, and one which for this very reason has ceased to be efficacious. But all this is found again to-day.

This is the magic element of which the thaumaturgists of all times and ages have made use; we know of no other which could put us in possession of a few rays of light illuminating the straight path to Occultism. Should even my opinion not be based upon a firm foundation, this would alter nothing with regard to the facts which it is my duty to record; for the mode of interpretation of these facts is of no importance so long as the phenomena related are positive, real, and important. The efficient cause of these phenomena is a merely secondary object.

Perceiving something superhuman in certain apparitions, which, let us say, were not pure creations of the brain, man has peopled space with genii; then he has turned to evoke them, to call upon them; he has given

them names, qualities, a power, and every favour he received from this quarter he attributed to them and considered as due to them.

Was this an illusion, the result of an overheated imagination? Often, no doubt, this was the case. They attributed to God, to the genii, that which was in the regular course of nature. But there were men who were not mistaken; they discovered the point from where the error took its origin, and they also knew the source of truth; they permitted the masses to stick to the belief that they were on the right track; thus they removed from the eyes of all the sight of profound operations and of sublime secrets. The ignorant herd finding itself abandoned to its own resources, prayed, conjured, traced signs and circles, etc.; sometimes the beginning of a certain work was the result, an outline of facts, and that sufficed to make them fancy themselves sorcerers and magicians.

The man who first magnetised the point of a knife, and attracted with it steel needles, was bound to be a sorcerer, and perhaps the man elected to pass as one. He made a simple thing appear mysterious, and a matter of no consequence was magnified. Thus it was with all arts and discoveries, they were carefully concealed in the beginning; chemistry and physics were at first only taught under the seal of an oath, and if we could produce a book containing the first operations in either of these departments, I am sure no *savant* of the present day would be able to comprehend them.

It is the same with magic; I could defy all modern sorcerers to reveal the true sense and meaning hidden under the figures and emblems which are contained in conjuring books or works of practical magic. If the key is lost both for them and us, the facts are still there; they have their meaning. It is these facts which must serve as the basis for the reconstruction of the ancient science.

This is a difficult task; it is hard to make that intelligible which has no definite character, that which cannot be plainly narrated; one runs the risk of losing oneself in vague phraseology, utterly unintelligible. But just as one may be permitted to talk to the blind about light, of which they know nothing, in the same manner shall I endeavour to say something on this occult subject.

Amongst the facts stored up in the history of the past I was above all struck with accounts of levitation and ascension of bodies in space. What astonished me equally as much were accounts of material objects being upset or displaced by a force which was said to proceed from a good or bad spirit. All Christian works are unanimous on this subject; none reject it. Certain practices of Indian sages corroborated the existence of such phenomena, and proved their identity.

Seeing that the works on magic contained all alike most circumstantial accounts of operations implying a decided infraction of the laws of nature; seeing, moreover, that neither stake nor torture was able to extort any disavowal of these facts from the enlightened disciples of this science, I said to myself, how is it that men of science and knowledge should have consciously given utterance to lies in order to bolster up and pass as truths such freaks of extravagance? This, I said to myself, is impossible! And I read, and read again, the works of these philosophers, of these ancient sages, these precursors of our arts, of our sciences, men who advanced civilisation so far by wise laws, men who themselves gave the example of a life, free from all vice and taint of immorality; I was stunned, confounded, for all these philosophers, all these sages, were magicians.

But what did they mean with such words as—Divine power, evil principle, spirit of light, spirit of darkness, angel and demon, God and devil, hell and heaven? What is the meaning of a power given to man by God, a power which nothing can resist, the faith which transports mountains, etc., etc. What lesson and what light can this long list of miracles, of men suddenly struck down, of walls demolished, of water changed into wine, of bread multiplied, and of so many other wonderful works performed by a secret power, convey to us? To reject them all as fables or myths appeared to me the work of a madman or fool.

Benalla, March 26th, 1884.

(To be continued.)

MATTER OR SPIRIT? INADEQUACY OF MATERIALISM.

BY HUDSON TUTTLE.

GUIZOT forcibly expresses the value of a knowledge of future life when he says: "Belief in the supernatural (spiritual) is the special difficulty of our time; denial of it is the form of all assaults on Christianity, and that acceptance of it lies at the root not only of Christianity but of all positive religion whatsoever."

He stands not alone in this conclusion. The difficulty to a great majority of men of science and leaders of thought appears insurmountable, and they no longer feel, a necessity of defending their want of belief, but smile at the credulity of those who believe anything beyond what the senses reveal. Not only the infidel world perceive this difficulty, it is well understood by the leaders of Christianity, who have been taught its strength in the irrepressible conflict which has culminated in the want of belief of the present time. With the result before them it is idle for them to assert that the Bible, as a revelation, is sufficient to remove this difficulty, which has grown in the very sanctuary, and in the shadow of the Bible. While the value of the Bible as interpreted by Christianity depends on belief in immortality, it has not proved the existence of man beyond the grave in so absolute a manner as to remove all doubt, and yet of all evidence it was designed to give, that on this point should be the most complete and irrefragable. The resurrection of Jesus Christ proves nothing, even admitted in its most absolute form. If Christ was the Son of God, and God himself, he was unlike mortals, and what is true of him is not necessarily so of them. His physical resurrection does not prove theirs. Admitting similarity, his bodily resurrection after three days, while his body remained unchanged, does not prove theirs after they have become dust, and scattered through countless forms of life for a thousand ages. If with some sects the resurrection of the body be discarded, then the resurrection of Christ has no significance, for it is expressly held that his body was revivified, and taken from the tomb.

Skepticism has increased because the supporters of religion have not attempted to keep pace with the march of events, but on the contrary asserted that they had all knowledge possible to gain on this subject, and that everything outside of their interpretation was false. Instead of founding religion on the constitution of man, and making immortality his birthright, they have regarded both as foreign to him, and only gained by acceptance of certain doctrines. They thus removed immortality from the domain of accurate knowledge, and those who pursued science turned from a subject which ignored their methods and conclusions in disgust. Hence, unfortunately, we have had the great army of investigators and thinkers in the realm of matter studying its phenomena and laws, never even approaching the threshold of the spiritual; and, on the other hand, the more important domain of spirit, of man's future, which retrospects his present life and all past ages, as well as reaches into the ages to come, was the especial care of those who scorned Nature, and abhorred reason.

Hence the antagonism which can only be removed by the priest laying aside his books as infallible authority, discarding beliefs, dogmas, and metaphysical word legger-damein, and studying the inner world in the same manner that the outer world has been so advantageously explored. When this has been done, it may be found that physical investigators have not the whole truth even where they have been most exact. It may be found that having omitted the spiritual side in all their investigations, their conclusions are erroneous to the extent of that factor which may be one of the most important. It may be found that in order to have a perfect and complete knowledge of the external world, the internal or spiritual must be understood.

There can be but two methods of explaining the origin and evolution of the universe—the material and spiritual. The first sees in matter all potentialities, all possibilities, and claims that of and by itself it passes through the changes called creation. There is no need of an external

intelligence or God. There is no spirit existence. Love, justice, truth, and right grow out of selfishness, are a part of it, and go out with the expiring taper of life. This is the philosophy of muck, and the science of dirt.

The second sets out with the claim that beneath the fleeting phantasmagoria called creation is a realm of force and energy of which we only know by its observed effects. Justice, right, truth and love, are not because in the struggle for existence man found them expedient, but because they are inwrought into the foundation of things. The human being is not a wave thrown up from the seething sea of life, to fall back again in foam, but the heir of an infinite existence.

Here we face the time old questions: What is matter? What is Spirit? The philosophy of nature here has its foundation. There is no middle ground. The materialist starts from the atom, which in itself, he says, has all the possibilities of the universe, and outside of which there is nothing.

But who knows of the atom? Who has seen it? Who felt, smelled, or tasted it? No one. The materialists claim that all we can know of motion is through the senses, yet here on the very threshold of investigation confessedly the senses are dumb. Of the atom the senses know nothing, hence the materialists go beyond the senses, and base their system of nature on hypothetical atoms, the existence of which is doubted by some of these bodies!

It would be a waste of time to explore the field wherein the baseless dreams of philosophers and scientists have grown like Jonah's gourd, overshadowing the barren sands. The manner in which the conclusions as to the nature of the distinct and indestructible atom is arrived at, shows the crude and childlike character of the theory. If we take a fragment of matter and break it into distinct pieces, these are again divisible, and so on until we reach a point beyond which division is impossible. One of these indivisible particles, says the materialist, is an atom, a conclusion derived from a gross conception of material division, and the limitation of the mind. Endow this atom with force, or call it a centre of propagation, and their system of cosmogony is complete. Yet these are only conjectures, and in fact baseless.

With equal arrogance the materialist treads the higher ground of vitality, of mind and morals. Out of the atom springs life, intelligence, and morality, forgetting that the fundamental proposition on which their system rests is a guess, a surmise, and nothing more.

Investigation by other means than the primitive experience by mechanical division, shows that the atom has no existence as a fixed entity. Prof. Crookes has demonstrated that matter has properties hitherto unknown. By way of illustration, granting the existence of atoms, if a vessel be closed and the air exhausted until only one hundred atoms remain, that hundred will fill the vessel, leaving no space. If the vacuum be made more perfect, and only ten remain, the ten occupy the same space, and if the process be carried so far that only one atom remain, it would still fill the vessel. The atomists might divide it indefinitely, and yet each division would fill all the space.

But it is found that matter thus rarefied manifests new properties, and the tangible fades into the intangible. Pure force appears, and it has been conjectured that the attenuation might be carried to a point when matter would be resolved into force.

As the idea of the atom is only an immature conception incapable of demonstration, we find that matter of which the atom is the component is incapable of definition. Of matter we know nothing, for we never come in sensuous contact with it: we only know its forces as expressed by phenomena. The succession of seasons, the recurrence of day and night, the teeming earth, the starry heavens—these are manifestations of matter. Matter here is revealed to us as an appearance; the concrete expression of force. Need we ask if these phenomena create themselves? So minerals become organic by the confluence of atoms.

If we were only obliged to explain the phenomena of matter, a theory might be plausibly maintained. Fronting one world we might be consistent; but we are

fronting two worlds, and theories must reach from one to the other. There is the caused and the cause ; the world of phenomena and the world of force ; the material and the spiritual. We are never satisfied with the doctrine that the caused causes itself. We may receive the doctrine of evolution, and yet we have only the road over which causation has travelled. Why ? Wherefore ? By what power ?

Instinctively we turn to the realm of spiritual causes. Man as a dual being faces two worlds, the world of matter and the world of spirit, and nothing short of a system of nature which embraces both satisfies his anxious desire for truth and knowledge.

SPIRITS OR SHELLS ?

As intimated in our last issue, our spirit-friend Peter, whose manifestations in the materialised form and by the direct voice through the mediumship of Mr. George Spriggs at numerous séances extending over several years, our readers are familiar with, has at various times asked us to give him an opportunity to deal with the assertions of the Theosophical Occultists regarding the nature and motives of the beings who are accustomed to manifest through these and other physical phases. We have accordingly devoted one sitting to this purpose, at which the subject was partially gone into, in the way of a quiet conversation with Peter, who spoke in the direct voice, and now report the results for the benefit of our readers.

We opened with some prefatory remarks to the effect that our desire was to elicit all the truth we could ; we knew that amongst the Occultists there were many cultured and earnest people ; we considered, however, that they were mistaken in some directions, but it was of no use to tell them so unless we could give them proof.

To this Peter replied—"In the first place I wish to say that I have been visiting the circle now for some years, and I think I have given sufficient proof that I am a living, thinking, human being, and that I have feelings the same as many other human beings on the earth, and I partake of the same characteristics in relation to other human beings. Now, I have, since I manifested in Melbourne, seen friends living on this planet who have been to circles in London, that no one in the circle knew about except myself and the interested person. Still I was able to recognise them, although some years had passed since I last saw them, and without anyone saying a word. I bring this forward to show that my memory does not fail me, and that I am the same as other beings, and was able to tell them about the circle they were present at. That proves that I am a living being, able to keep my memory, and able to take impressions on my memory since I have entered spirit-life."

To this we responded—"It is a general assertion that is made. The Occultists say distinctly that, in genuine materialisations, ninety-nine out of every hundred are produced by that to which they refuse to give the name of spirit, and the remaining one is produced by the 'astral form' of the medium ; in no case by disembodied spirits."

Peter in reply to this said—"Still, in the case I have spoken about, the medium did not know anything about my having met that friend in London, and other cases in which I have seen and met people in this part of the world, I think will go to prove that it is not the astral part of this medium. And now I have in a measure to prove that I am a spirit. I can only say that when I left the earth I entered into a spiritual condition, and since I have been in this condition my experience has become enlarged, and instead of gradually dying or fading away, my mind, capabilities, and powers have become expanded and increased, and I see no cause to think for one moment that I am dissolving or shall dissolve into the elements again, and as far as I know there is no other part of me in existence, only that which I manifested in different circles."

We asked—"Are you conscious of the process by which you produce the form ? Do you build matter upon your spiritual form ? Have you a form that seems material to you ?"

Reply—"I have a spiritual form when I come into the circle, a form to me material and solid in every way, a form that I can walk about, think, and act in, the same in a measure as I did in earth-life, and when I come to the circle, although I am invisible to you all, still my form is solid and material to me. Your circle is formed, your medium becomes a magnet to draw matter around him ; we are obliged for a time to seclude him in darkness, so that the matter may be drawn round him and kept there. When sufficient has been passed through the organisation of the medium, then we attract it to our selves, and are able to clothe ourselves so that you can see us."

We asked—"Is that done by an effort of will or desire ?"

"It is done by our will, and our understanding the process to draw and attract matter, making ourselves positive to it. Then do not think every form you see is an exact likeness or picture of the indwelling spirit. It is not so, because forms are made up of matter that we gather, and impressions often emanate along with it from the circle and friends to interfere with the perfect development of our materialised forms when we come into the circle. I will give you a proof of that. Notice that when not any of you have been thinking about your friends, they appear, and seem as natural as in earth-life ; but commence to think about them and wish for them to appear, and they come in a cloudy, hazy state, and cannot be recognised. The brain waves of the circle interfere with the proper development of our materialised forms. Then others are produced in other ways. Some spirits when they make their appearance only seem like a dead substance before you, with no life, no animation, and no power to speak, no power of expression. These forms are not necessarily the abode of the manifesting spirit, because the spirit might be outside, and still have power to produce or build up a form, so that they could in a measure be recognised."

"And that is done, we suppose, where they find a difficulty in clothing themselves ?"

"Yes, in clothing themselves with matter ; and then the condition of the circle makes a great difference to the building up of the forms. You have observed sometimes that our materialised forms are taller, at other times shorter. Now, our spiritual bodies are always of the same height, the same as your material bodies ; but when we cannot get matter to clothe them with sufficiently, they are bound to vary in different degrees. Now, I have manifested in a number of circles, and I have always tried, as far as I have been able, to prove myself, and to show that I was what I professed to be. But I also know it is possible for a person who is still alive on the earth to appear and visit a circle."

"Is it possible for them to materialise ?"

"If their brain is in an active state, and their mind directed that way, it is just as possible for them to do it as it is for spirits. They can manifest in physical form provided conditions are suitable for the manifestation."

We stated that the adepts claim to have the power to do this, that we did not deny their claim, but they deny that spirits have the power to do it.

Peter continued—"There is one thing I wish to say. I think that the friends I am acquainted with in this part of the world cannot say that I am short of intelligence, any more than they are themselves, they cannot say but that my wits are always as sharp as their's, and that I have always tried, as far as I was able, to do all the good I can, and to give advice where I thought it was necessary, according to my light."

We mentioned that it is asserted by those persons who profess to know all about it—that speaking of "John King" and himself—"The John Kings and Peters" are what they call *pisachas*, a sort of generic name applied to a certain class of beings, and that meant, according to a rather strong definition of one of the Hindoos, 'devil' or 'accursed devil.'

He replied—"But still, if there were a number of individuals in this city who took your name, that would not disprove your existence, and if I through my work, or John King through his, or other spirits through their's, have been able to make a name in the earth as

spirits, if others wish to trade upon their names we cannot prevent it."

"With regard to yourselves, we presume we must judge of you by your general work and conduct!"

"Yes, you are bound to give us a character according as you have found us, and judge of us the same as you judge of people in earth-life."

We observed that as far as our acquaintance went, we had always found him straightforward and honest, and if he were a man in the body we should regard him as a trustworthy honest man and we thought the same of him as a spirit. His conduct had always been such as to give confidence, and if he told us a thing that was not incredible we should believe it on account of what we knew of his honesty.

He said—"I think the friends in India must have had it misrepresented to them, or they cannot have had much knowledge of spiritual beings. They might have a knowledge of spiritual beings in their sphere of thought, those that were in sympathy with them. Still, I know and recognise that Colonel Olcott, one of the leaders, has had great experience in connection with Spiritualism, and also materialisation. But then, to follow it up, and to know the characters of individuals, you require to be with them, to meet them under different circumstances and conditions, before you are able to judge and to say what sort of character individuals are; and if you find one who is untruthful and not to be relied on, you cannot, according to the ways of your earth-life, condemn all because of that one. I do not deny that there is a number untruthful, but we cannot help that."

We asked, "As a rule, cannot those more on the physical plane materialise more readily, or are they not more akin to matter?"

"Some might be so, and others not so. It all depends upon the conditions and states of mind of the individuals, whether spirits or mortals. Many of you can travel in sleep; not many can produce physical manifestations outside of your bodies. Many spirits can travel from place to place, and visit the earth, but they cannot produce physical manifestations. As in music, and in other sciences, so it is in spiritual science; some take an interest in it to know and get a practical knowledge of the causes of all things, while others, even in the spirit-world, take no interest in it, and still they are high and elevated beings. Others take a greater interest in producing a variety of physical manifestations, and oftentimes they are those that are glad to learn the earth-lessons which they have neglected in their earth-life, while other more intelligent minds direct them, and guide them in the production of these manifestations."

"Is it the rule, that where there is an organised band, like yourself and others who work with you, there are intelligences higher than yourselves who superintend and help you?"

"Yes, that is so, and they also are studying and practising in their spiritual homes, and then they give their knowledge to us, and try and teach us how to produce other manifestations."

"And you feel that you can originate things yourselves? It is denied by the occultists that you—presuming you were not the essential spirit we believe you to be, but what they call a 'shell,' could do so. They say that these 'shells' cannot originate thought; they can only take ideas from the circle, or other mentalities."

To this Peter replied—"That would be difficult for almost anyone to do, because it would be difficult to prove what is new. Supposing I were to lay before you an elaborate plan, I could not prove to you that that plan had not been thought of by someone else before me. It is so with men on earth; one man takes up a plan, and fancies he is the first; but he soon finds out there are others that think in the same direction, and consequently he cannot say that he was the originator of the plan. I know that my powers are greatly expanded since I have been in spirit-life. I know my intelligence has become quickened in it; I know I can think more clearly, act and speak, and that altogether I have become better, and have more knowledge, and I find, if men on earth produce anything new, I can, now I am in spirit-life, with greater facility. Besides, when you sit in

circles we oftentimes ask you to change your seats, or suggest things that you have not thought of. What is that? That is good evidence of thought and suggestion outside the minds of the circle. And, again, when we are able to speak, and other friends manifest, and we are able to give their names, which no one in the circle has been thinking of, what is that? But perhaps they may say it is *floating ideas*."

"Yes, they may say so, but it is simply a theory."

"Then our giving those things which the sitters do not know themselves, but afterwards find out to be correct, I think it goes a long way to prove, if it does not altogether prove, that we are what we say we are. And then, ask any spirit that has manifested in circles—perhaps they have manifested for years and years—in any part of the world. The only cry is—we are the spirits of those you thought were dead; we live in spirit-life a natural life."

"Do your surroundings seem as material and tangible in every respect as when you were here in the body?"

"Not always, and yet at times they are more tangible to us. At times we enter into what you would call the superior state, or into a trance state. When our spiritual bodies lay resting, and partaking of that rest that Nature gives it, then our spirit leaves and travels into regions we have not seen, or thought, or heard of before. We seem then to comprehend the great mysteries of Nature, and to know that our powers are god-like and infinite. When we come back, while we are able to realise that we have been away, we cannot fully realise what we have seen and heard, until we enter into that state again. And often it acts upon our spiritual organisation, and frames it and moulds it, changing its appearance for the better to a degree, so that many who come to spirit-life can scarcely recognise its likeness to the physical organisation they saw left on earth."

We remarked that we saw the analogy. It was the same as a person who lives two lives here, who is in the natural state, and often in the abnormal or trance state, or even in a dream.

Whereupon Peter observed—"I suppose you would call our bodies when our spirits are travelling in that condition—you would call our spiritual bodies *shells* then?"

"Yes. Would your spiritual body—would that part of you be able to respond while the other part was away?"

"No; it is the same as your body in sleep, only it brings things more vividly before our minds, and we remember more distinctly. Our bodies then could not come to your circles, and we could not produce the manifestations which we do produce when we come with our spiritual bodies. We might leave our spiritual bodies, and our spirits could travel to your circle. Many do thus travel, and stand before their friends, but are not able to give intelligence. They merely stand there in their spiritual forms, while their bodies are resting in the spirit-world. They are not able to speak, or give any proof whatever of their existence. And it is often the case when strangers visit your circles, these shadows of friends appear, not in physical form, but only to the eye of spirits or clairvoyants."

Referring to this explanation, we said—"That is the state that the Occultists would refer to as the general state; what you make out to be only an exceptional state. They make out that the state of the spirit is what is called subjective; like a dream state; it is self-conscious, and seems to be passing through experiences, and enjoying itself and the beauties of its surroundings, but is unable to communicate with the earth, or manifest itself in any way. They assert that to be the general state, while you make it out to be an abnormal one in connection with your ordinary state."

To this Peter replied—"I know from experience that both states are true. We live in both states."

"Yes, that throws some light on the subject, and would make their position more feasible, if they were not so positive of it. It shows there is a true side to it."

"If they hold that it is a general state, then they are in error, I am sure in that, because I know when we appear in the circles our bodies are with us; it may be

that at times we throw our minds away back a distance. I have found some spirits at times in that state, who have been away, and when the friends have woke them up to the stern facts of spirit-life, they would rather have remained in that state; it was more pleasant to them, the same as with ourselves, when you have a pleasant dream, you dislike to be woken up to the surrounding conditions."

" You pass into that subjective state at times?"

" We often pass into that state, and are very pleased to go. Now, when I manifest in the circle time after time, of course my spiritual body gets tired and weary; I require rest. I lay down in a suitable place; then my spirit roams forth, and sees all those beautiful sights and conditions around, which perhaps leave their impress upon my spiritual organism."

" But in your state, where you are in a society, the same as here in a city or town, there is always a certain portion of the people asleep?"

" Always some asleep."

" And others awake, and it is only in the sleeping state they have the power of passing away to the higher state, separating the essential spirit from the spiritual body, the same as we separate our spirits from our material bodies?"

" Yes, that is so."

We remarked that we thought we could glean from what he had told us something of importance and interest.

He said—" I would say before we leave, I know—it is rather dogmatic, isn't it?—I know that I am a living human being. I lived on the earth, and passed away to spirit-life. I am able to come back and manifest at circles, to stand before you in a physical form, speak to you, recall things of the past a number of years ago, able to recognise old friends, the medium himself through whom I manifest not knowing anything about it, and speak to the friends I recognise of things of the past. I know I live a natural life in the spirit-world; my body is solid and substantial to me in spirit-life, and I can say earth-life is the shadowy, while spirit-life is the substantial and real life."

We asked—" What is the central motive that prompts you to do what you do in connection with these manifestations? Have you one central motive, and if so, what is it?"

To this Peter replied—" I have one central motive—with others, to manifest at the circles, first, because I take an interest and delight in producing physical manifestations; secondly, because the world requires proofs, and spirit-friends in higher conditions have solicited us to do all we can to give physical proofs to those who are seeking for them. And think not because I come, I get no pleasure in it. I do, and I also look forward in the future to meeting in spirit-life many friends whom I have met through the circles. And while I am producing physical manifestations it also improves my own mind, and assists my development and progression. Also I am able to meet many spirits in a lower condition than myself, and give them a helping hand. Do not think me egotistical in what I have been saying. It is just what I feel, and just what I know. I do not wish anyone in spirit-life or earth-life to accept it merely because I say it. If they do not believe me, let them form a circle and sit; get into communication with me or any other spirit friends, and sit for three years, and see if I do not prove my existence, and if I do not prove that I can do what I say."

SPIRIT TEACHINGS*

THIS book is a collection of spiritual communications given by automatic writing during the years 1873 and 1874, some of which were published in the now extinct *Spiritualist* newspaper, with the signature of "Imperator," and attracted considerable attention by reason of their beauty and lucidity. The medium has been frequently urged to give a larger measure of them to the world, but has only recently found time to arrange a

* Spirit Teachings; by M.A., Oxon. London: the Psychological Press Association, 1883.

series for publication, the intelligences who gave the original writings having assisted to revise and arrange them in a connected form as was possible with the diverse subjects treated upon. In a brief introduction the medium describes the method of their reception. They were purely automatic, and in a handwriting quite distinct from his own, each different intelligence preserving its individual character of autography, as well as style of matter. To prevent the possibility of his own mind influencing the communications, the medium says: "I cultivated the power of occupying my mind with other things during the time the writing was going on, and was able to read an abstruse book and follow out a line of close reasoning, while the message was written with unbroken regularity."

Educated for the Anglican church, and deeply read in its theology, he was naturally imbued with its tenets, and the conflict of the new revelation with these was a source of deep concern with him. He demanded evidence of the identity and authority of his teachers, laying down conditions with which they refused to comply. This led him nearly to the abandonment of his mediumship, but ultimately and after careful examination, the cogency of the arguments and the intrinsic value of the general matter convinced him of its reliability, and from that time tests and proofs came unasked and unsought for. There are two very excellent instances given, one of the power of spirits to read closed books, and another of spirit identity.

The "teachings" are varied in their subjects (generally in reply to questions propounded by the medium) they picture a God of love, and assert that punishment is the inevitable result of the violation of law, and not the act of an angry God. In touching upon the best conditions for mediumship the spirit says—"If you desire, friend, to facilitate our work, and to attain the best results, you should bring to the sitting a body healthy and sound, senses clear and watchful, and a mind passive and receptive."

Reason is pointed to as the touchstone wherewith to test all that is presented to us either by spirit or mortal, and the writers express their willingness to submit their writings to the ordeal.

In section 8 is given the "spirit-creed," which in brief reads thus:—

Honour and love your Father, God.
(Worship)
Help your brother onward in the path
of progress. (Brotherly love) ...
Tend and guard your own body.
(Body culture)
Cultivate every means of extending
knowledge. (Mental progress)
Seek for fuller view of progressive
truth. (Spiritual growth) ...
Do ever the right and good in accordance
with your knowledge. (Integrity) ...
Cultivate communion with the spirit-
land by prayer and frequent inter-
course. (Spiritual nurture) ...

Duty to God.

Duty to neighbour.

Duty to self.

This section is a very fine one, which, did space permit, we should reproduce it in full, and we shall take an early opportunity of doing so.

Summing up the influence of this life on the after-life, it is said, "Man makes his own future, stamps his own character, suffers for his own sins, and must work out his own salvation." Surely a more reasonable and braver course than depending upon a vicarious atonement. There is a striking similarity between the teachings of this book and a series received in Victoria some twenty-two years since, the M.S. of which are in our possession, which at some future time we shall bring under the notice of our readers. Meantime we strongly recommend the volume to those interested in the ethics of Spiritualism.

MR. Milner Stephen is practising the healing by laying on of hands at Dunedin. The advertising columns of the *Morning Herald* of April 5th contains several columns of testimonials from persons who have been permanently cured by him.

SUPPLEMENT TO

The Harbinger of Light.

MAY 1, 1884.

CHRISTIANITY: ITS ORIGIN AND ESOTERIC
MEANING;

BY H. J. BROWNE.

*A Lecture delivered at the Masonic Hall, Melbourne,
on Sunday evening, March 30th, 1884.*

"And truth alone, where'er my lot be cast,
In scenes of plenty or the pining waste,
Shall be my end and aim—my glory to the last."

Ladies and gentlemen.—The title of my lecture this evening is Christianity: its origin and esoteric, that is its hidden meaning.

In stating the conclusions which have been arrived at by me in connection with this important subject, I am not so presumptuous as to suppose that they are faultless but merely submit them for your consideration as being that which appears to me nearer to the truth than the views popularly entertained in regard thereto.

It remains with you to receive or reject the opinions expressed by me, according as they commend themselves or otherwise to your individual consciences. The practice of listening only to opinions which accord with one's views and which confirm one's prejudices, is unfortunately too common an error, for in all matters that are undemonstrable it is alone by the interchange of opposite opinions that the truth can be arrived at. Theology like everything else has two sides, a false and a true one. If the views which you at present entertain are really true, no argument can be brought forward can upset them, for truth is invulnerable; on the other hand, if they are erroneous, the sooner you are aware of it the better. Bear in mind that it is much easier to swim with the tide of popular opinion than it is for one to endeavour to stem its surging current, and that my sole object is the exposure of error and the elucidation of truth. Bear in mind also, as Mackay wisely remarks, that—

"The man is thought a knave or fool,
Or Atheist plotting crime,
Who for the advancement of his kind
Is wiser than his time."

And as the poet Whittier writes :

"Every age on him who strays
From its broad and beaten ways,
Pours its sevenfold vial."

That there is a widespread declension in all the Christian sects from the old standards of faith, and that a disturbed condition of opinion in regard to religion exists throughout Christendom, we have evidence from all quarters. Even from the various pulpits "a growing want of faith" is constantly being deplored; and, as has been truly remarked by Emerson: "no man can go with his thoughts about him into one of our churches without feeling that what hold the public worship once had on man is gone or going. It has lost its grasp on the affections of the good and the fears of the bad."

We need not travel far to ascertain the reason of this state of affairs in the religious atmosphere, and for the causes which produce this prevalent decay and almost universal death of faith in society. The advance of science, the expansion of thought, and the freedom of speech and investigation, now so generally prevalent, are the chief causes.

Religion throughout the length and breadth of Christendom may, therefore, be said to be in a transition state, owing to the intelligence of the day having outgrown the superstitious ideas which have for ages past been received by the majority of the people as divine verities and to the general enlightenment of the masses, tending to bring men into a greater preparedness for the reception

of spiritual truth, thereby indicating that the need of a new revelation was never greater than now. A grand reformation has in fact set in, which, though not yet generally acknowledged, will in due course usher in a higher and nobler conception of God and of man's destiny.

It is a popular but fallacious assumption that respect for all religious truth is likely to go with the rejection of dogmas which are not only totally opposed to science and common sense, but are even dishonouring towards God and debasing to those who continue to support them, for, as Carlyle wisely remarks: "the old never dies till this happen—till the soul of the good that was in it has got itself transferred into the practical new."

In the rational religion now dawning on the world, those portions of truth incorporated in anterior religions will be supplemented by new revelations conformable to the advancing enlightenment of the people.

The transition from the old to the new, I am aware, will be slow, for so wedded are most people to the errors, prejudices, and delusions in which they have been brought up, and so tenaciously do they cling to early instilled superstition, that even when the falsity and absurdity thereof are clearly demonstrated to them, they still continue to reverence and cherish them, and to reject that which both truth and reason command to their understanding. If truth, however, is an essential requisite of religion (as it must be), all lovers thereof should willingly surrender those doctrines and positions which are antagonistic to the intelligence of the age they live in, consequently are no longer tenable by all who possess a spark of honesty. You may rely upon it that whatever good has come to the world through a mistaken faith could have come as well without its errors.

All ideas, however ancient they are, and however much they may be revered as truth, which are opposed to natural facts, consequently are undemonstrable, must be fictitious, and the principles of all faiths, aside from their connection with morality, are of little benefit to mankind, for intelligence and morality, virtue and truth, are the only means through which the world can be redeemed from ignorance and sin. Before, however, humanity can merge to a truthful plane of religious thought, the real basis of religious ideas must be understood. Unfortunately, knowledge in advance of popularly received ideas is regarded with distrust, and those who have the candour to submit such knowledge to their neighbours are, as I have remarked, treated with contumely, while those who pander to their predilections and confirm their prejudices for interested purposes, are revered and respected; for—

"Faith fanatic faith, once wedded fast
To some dear falsehood, hige it to the last."

It is the height of absurdity to shut our eyes to the fact that all religions, (Christianity not excepted) must undergo change and modification as man's higher faculties are developed. The crude thoughts of infancy that satisfied the masses in ignorant and superstitious times being no longer adapted to meet the spiritual wants of educated and intelligent men and women, must give place to higher and nobler views, for human ideas on all subjects expand and alter with growth. Mankind being subject to the inevitable law of progression, must, whether willingly or otherwise, advance, not only in their views of art and science, but also in their views of their relations to God and to each other; for every fresh discovery gives birth to new thoughts and creates new wants; and these wants must be met with responses as intimately connected with them as every effect with its cause. It is in consequence of this that modern thought differs from that of the past, in that its views of God

and of man's present and future existence take a much broader scope, and grasp with the hands of a stronger and more rational faith the great fact of immortality. As the poet has truly remarked :

" The new must e'er supplant the old
While time's unceasing current flows,
Only new beauties to unfold
And brighter glories to disclose."

It was in like manner, owing to the great strides made by philosophy during the two first centuries of what is termed the Christian era, that the pagan temples of Rome began to be less and less attended and supported by the intelligent and wealthy classes, and that the necessity arose for the inauguration of a more enlightened religious system, which, while it retained all the good that was embodied in the old religions, would displace their numerous gods and goddesses, and offer in their place a conception of Deity possessing attributes which would commend the new religion to all—to the enlightened as well as to the ignorant.

It was not, however, till the fourth century, during the reign of Constantine the Great, that the old pagan religions became merged into the new. I may here observe that the conversion of this bloodthirsty emperor to Christianity was cunningly ascribed by the priests of his day to a vision which he was said to have seen in the sky; but the real incentive thereto, was evidently the promise held out to him by the priests of the new religion of absolution from his sins, of which he had committed many and grievous; no such hopes being held out by the old. The pagan religions inculcated, as you are aware, the truer, juster, and more rational doctrine of retributive justice in the world to come.

Constantine (we learn by history) drowned his wife Fausta in a bath of boiling water. He murdered his father-in-law, two brothers-in-law, a nephew, and several others. The crowning act of this Christian emperor was, however, the beheading of his eldest son Crispus in the very year in which he presided at the Council of Nice. Such was the character of the man who changed the Roman empire from paganism to Christianity on the ground that Jesus was better than Jupiter, and Mary than Venus. Even after his conversion to Christianity, Constantine is represented as having retained a certain respect for the old pagan god Jupiter, to whom he caused a statue to be erected.

I may here remark that the misrepresentations of heathen theology and the distortion of its forms of religious worship indulged in by many Christian writers on the subject, do not redound to their credit, too many of whom have violated truth for the purpose of extolling their own religion at the expense of the old. As the Rev. F. B. Gross remarks: "perhaps on no subject within the ample reign of human knowledge have so many fallacious ideas been propagated as upon that of the gods and the worship of heathen antiquity. Nothing but a shameful ignorance, a pitiable prejudice, or the contemptible pride which denounces all investigation as a useless or criminal labour, when it must be feared that they will result in the overthrow of established systems of faith, or the modification of long-cherished principles of science, can have thus misrepresented the theology of heathenism, and distorted, nay caricatured its forms of religious worship. It is time that posterity should raise its voice in vindication of violated truth, and that the present age should learn to recognise in the hoary past a little of that common sense of which it boasts with so much complacency, as if the prerogative of reason was the birth-right only of modern times." I fearlessly maintain that every unbiased and candid scholar must admit that side by side with the most gross superstition there was much that was good in paganism, the same as is the case with all the established religions of the day, and that—

" Truth is truth where'er 'tis found,
On Christian or on pagan ground."

Tracing religion back as far as we possess materials for so doing, Phallie worship, in which the sexual organs formed the leading symbols, appears to be the most ancient. This in the course of time merged into the astronomical religion, of which (strange as it may appear to those who learn it for the first time), Christianity is

but an offshoot, greatly misunderstood by the generality of those who uphold it. In order to substantiate this statement it will be necessary for me to make frequent reference to the astronomical religion, and to explain the connection between the two.

The sun, it must be admitted, is the best emblem that man possesses of divinity, as it is that supplieth "that light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world." It is this great orb that shines upon every nation, savage and civilised, that supplies those fructifying rays that give food to all—to the just and to the unjust; it may therefore be truly said to be no respecter of persons. The sun also is the best symbol for that everlasting truth which will in time enable man to walk uprightly without stumbling, and unite all in one grand universal brotherhood.

The magi, or wise men of the east, of whom we read in olden times, viz., the ancient sages of India, Persia, and Egypt, were the *savants* or philosophers of the times and countries in which they lived. They worshipped the sun, moon, and stars, simply as visible representatives of ideas. These sages from their deep contemplation and insight into the working of the divine force in nature, possessed a profound knowledge of the universe, consequently they were enabled to sway the minds of the ignorant and credulous masses in any way they desired. Thus, while to the initiated the worship of the sun was merely as the symbol of light, intellectual and spiritual, the ignorant and uninitiated worshipped the sun, the moon, and the stars as actual deities.

The successors of these sages, viz., the priests of the various sects founded on the worship of the heavenly bodies, were also the most learned of their day. They, in like manner, continued to control the minds of the masses by forming the primitive theologies into systems, and creating gods and goddesses to suit their own purposes. These priests were perfectly aware of the underlying truth beneath all these images; but from interested motives they sought to hide the truth from the vulgar, upon whose credulity they relied for the aggrandisement of themselves and their temples, giving their dupes merely the outward symbols, so as to keep them in ignorance and thereby subservient to priesthood.

At length, through the advancement of Grecian philosophy, the falsities and absurdities of the various pagan religions, with their gods and goddesses, and their foolish rites and ceremonies, became apparent to the more enlightened and wealthy, who in consequence withdrew, as I have remarked, their countenance and support from the different pagan temples. Owing to their withdrawal, and to the diminution of revenue for the purposes of the craft, the priests of the various pagan sects combined, in order to preserve their status, to formulate and proclaim a new religious system, which, while it retained esoterically the leading symbols and doctrines of the old religions, embraced also the highest teachings of the philosophy of the age, thereby to secure its acceptance by all classes of society. It was thus that in the time of Constantine, as I have observed, the numerous pagan gods and goddesses merged into the new virgin-born God, the ancient astronomical symbols being perpetuated in the new religion.

Grecian philosophy, I may here state, was to the ancient world what scientific investigation is to the modern; being opposed to superstition it was vindictively crushed out (at a terrible cost to humanity), by ecclesiasticism, by which it was superseded. While philosophy taught that all distinctions which existed among men were chiefly the results of natural conditions, ecclesiasticism impudently denied the inherent right of man to the possession of individual mental freedom, and found favour with the world, by pandering to its ignorance and credulity with specious promises of salvation from sins and future rewards to all who would acknowledge its claims to jurisdiction over the race.

The conception of the new man-God was evidently borrowed by his priestly creators from the Egyptian theology, in which Horus is represented as the son of Osiris (the sun) and Isis (the earth). Thus the sun-God, or son of God, became the offspring of the sun and earth, the union of the sun and earth being the apparent

source of creative power by whom all things are made, and without whom was not anything made that was made; so all life centres in them. These subtle priests, therefore, gave to their God-incarnate (in whom they comprised the fulness of the Godhead bodily), power over all things in heaven and on earth; at the same time they knavishly assumed to themselves, as his deputies, the power of remission of sins. "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained." This was their great master-stroke, as it held out an inducement which the older forms of paganism did not possess.

The popular religion of our day is, therefore, merely reformed paganism, or civilised heathenism as it has been termed, and like all the other established religions, its origin, as I have said, is astronomical. A writer truly remarks, "all religions centre around astronomical worship," and in order to preserve the old ideas, all religions (including Christianity), as I shall presently illustrate, have been veiled under astronomical signs. Consequently, the various ancient scriptures are, to a very large extent, merely allegorical representations, the exoteric or literal meaning of which is not the real one. They were thus designed by their authors in order to hide, as I have already stated, the truths contained therein from the ignorant masses, while conveying to the initiated their esoteric, or hidden, or astrological meaning.

The Old Testament is simply Hebrew mythology, or the Jewish version of an astronomical allegory, for taken in its exoteric meaning it is largely composed of the most absurd fables, that are a standing disgrace to the intelligence of the age we live in. Take, for example, the stories of a serpent speaking to a woman: of an ass talking to a man: of a whale swallowing another man, etc. In its esoteric meaning, however, the Bible explains certain combinations in the heavens, and in this way alone are many of its statements made intelligible. In a few instances in this book however, we find the esoteric meaning openly given; for instance, in Job (to prove that heavenly laws never alter), we find it stated: "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou bring forth Mazzaroth in his season? or canst thou guide Acturus with his sons? (Job xxxviii, 31, 32.)

It is worthy of remark that there are twelve signs in the zodiac, twelve tribes of Israel, twelve apostles, and that Elisha, which means "God that saves," or the sun, is anciently represented as ploughing with twelve yoke of oxen before him. Moses represents Aquarius, or Neptune whose dwelling is where the sun rises at the Equinox; he is, therefore, said to be saved from, or drawn out of, the water. Esau represents Hercules with the lion's skin, and therefore is all over like an hairy garment. John the Baptist also represents Aquarius or the water-bearer.

Mr. W. Oxley, a gentleman who has devoted considerable study to the subject, writing in regard to the Bible history as interpreted by the stars, clearly demonstrates the astro-masonic character of the leading Biblical statements. Mr. Oxley declares them to be "an intellectual and spiritual adaptation of solar, sidereal, and planetary motions and positions, which forms the base, scientifically true, of an allegory that has supplied the moral and physical life-force to hundreds of thousands of human beings." He further observes:

"All ancient Scriptures bear the same impress, which is at once astronomical and astrological We are now in actual possession of the veritable system on which the whole of the Bible was based."

The sacred bull of the Brahmans, the Apis of the Egyptians, the baal or bull of the Chaldeans, the bull sacrificed by the Persians in the symbolic mysteries of Mithra, and the bull seen by Ezekiel in the heavens (see Ezek., L.), represented both the active or masculine principle in nature, and likewise the constellation Taurus, or the bull in the Zodiac, styled in the Jewish scriptures Jehovah, or the Great I Am, who was jealous of the bulls of Bashan, and of all other bulls or gods. The bull was the emblematical symbol of the sun at the vernal equinox⁴ in the sign of Taurus the celestial bull. As has been truly remarked, "The bull certainly did pertain to astronomical myths among those nations who made him an

object of worship; otherwise, why those extended wings attached to the bulls of Chaldea and Persia in every instance, if they were not flying bulls that were represented; and what bull other than the bull of the Zodiac, ever so much as appeared to fly? The outward worship of the celestial bull was twenty-one hundred years older than the outward worship of the celestial lamb; the bull having preceded the ram at the vernal equinox by that period. In Persia there was a religion in which the bull was the leading symbol, contemporary with the baal or bel of the sunworship of the Chaldeans; which at a later period, when the vernal equinox occurred in the sign of the lamb, or agni of the Zoroastrian religion, gave place to the worship of the lamb. So in Egypt, the worship of the sacred bull Apis was contemporary with the baal or bull-worship of Chaldea and Persia, but was afterwards substituted by the ascendancy of the ram, when the latter took the place of the bull at the vernal equinox. The sun, whether at the vernal equinox in the bull or the lamb, or ram, was the same sun and the same object of worship." In Revelations iv., 6 to 9, the second beast, the celestial bull-calf, is manifestly referred to as having relation to the worship of the celestial lamb, the Anointed One, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world by dissipating the cold of winter. This vision evidently related to the state of the heavens at the vernal equinox some eighteen centuries ago, when the sun reached that point of its apparent annual course, no longer in the sign of the bull, but in the sign of the lamb, as the celestial sign in which the sun, at that time, rose to reign in glory during the summer months, was regarded by the Persians and the Jews. The sea of glass represented the azure dome of heaven, and the throne the position of the sun in the sign of Aries or Agni. The four beasts stood for the four seasons, or the Zodiacal constellations—Leo, Taurus, Aquarius, and the Eagle or substitute for Scorpio; there were also four evangelists. The six wings of each of the four beasts represented the six hours which each of these constellations occupied in passing from the horizon to the zenith, making together twenty-four hours, or length of time of the diurnal revolution of the earth, which, like the beasts and the four and twenty elders, rests not day nor night, for it revolves unceasingly around the sun—the king of heaven—which, either symbolically or otherwise, has been the object of veneration and worship for ages of millions upon millions of earth's inhabitants.

As I have already remarked, the sun is the fundamental symbol of every religion; from its being everywhere a visible manifestation of God it has been accepted as "the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person." It is upon this kingly orb that man depends for light and life, through the influence of which are produced all things needful to existence. To this day the course of the sun not only controls both the secular and ecclesiastical calendars of the Christian church, and the character and times of the festivals held in honour of Christ, but actually coincides with the main circumstances narrated of his life, from his conception and birth to his ascension and reception into heaven; and the same remarks apply equally to Krishna of the Hindus, Mithra of the Persians, Osiris of the Egyptians, and other ancient man-gods.

Sir Isaac Newton was the layman who first discovered and announced to the world that the Christian festivals were determined upon an astronomical basis. The day assigned to the birth of the Sun God of all the other religions was the same as that assigned, without a particle of historical evidence, by the Church to Christ. The shortest day (*i. e.* north of the Equator) — being the 21st, his birthday is put on the 25th, the first day that shows any elongation, and which is therefore the actual commencement of the year; while the 21st, on which the sun reaches his lowest point—when his worshippers are supposed to be filled with alarm lest their lord and master fail to rise again—is assigned to the doubting apostle Thomas.

Christmas has come and the Sun is born; but winter has still a long career to run, and consequently the Sun, as yet a feeble infant, has to undergo a series of struggles with the powers of darkness. And just as we find the

infant Christ exposed to the perils celebrated on Innocents' Day, we find the various representations of the Sun with difficulty and danger emerging into childhood. In the case of the Hindoo deity Chrishna—who was also said to have been born on the 25th December, cradled among shepherds, and greeted at his birth by an angelic chorus—a massacre of children was ordered by a jealous king named Cansa, in exact correspondence with the slaughter afterwards ascribed to Herod. In every case, however, the Sun-God escapes all dangers and grows in stature and favour with God and man, the days gradually gaining on the nights as he rises higher above the horizon until the vernal equinox, when they are equal.

This period of equality constitutes in all the solar religions a serious crisis in the Sun-God's history. For a time things seem to go against him, and mankind are in despair. The change to the south-west monsoon brings equinoctial storms which hide the Sun from their sight. He has succumbed to his foe. They fast long and mourn him dead (as in Lent). But being a God he cannot be holden of death. Nay, by his dying he shall prove himself conqueror over death, and his very death shall be a blessing and redemption for the nations; for the rains by which the Sun has been obscured are essential to the life of the Eastern world. Thus hope returns and despair is changed to joy as, from a point still higher in the heavens than that at which he had disappeared, he shines out with new and greater effulgence. His rising is followed by his final triumph and continued ascent towards the zenith, his kingdom of heaven, whence, in the heat and fruitfulness of summer, he sends down sustenance and comfort for men. But during the equinoctial period of the Sun's rising and ascension he is in the constellation of the lamb, as Aries used to be called. This also is his time to pass over the equinoctial line from the southern to the northern tropic. Now does the orb of day begin to attain his full powers. Thus in the Apocalypse we find the Lamb adored in the presence of the throne by four living creatures, the cardinal constellations of the heavens corresponding with the four archangels—viz., Gabriel, Michael, Uriel, and Raphael, and representing the four seasons of the year, and twenty-four elders, who fall down before him crying "Worthy is the Lamb," &c., representing the twenty-four hours which constitute the solar day, the twelve apostles representing the number of months of the year. The constellation Virgo (the virgin) represents the ideal woman—the divine mother. Osiris, Mithra, Bacchus, Chrishna, and Christ are all represented as having been born at midnight, between Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, in a cave or stable. At this moment the constellation Virgo is cut exactly in half by the eastern horizon, the sun itself being beneath the earth, in the sign of Capricorn, or stable of Augeas, the cleansing of which constituted one of the labours of Hercules—who also represented the sun. Justin Martyr boasts that Christ was born when the Sun takes its birth in the stable of Augeas, coming as a second Hercules to cleanse a foul world. The Church celebrates the assumption of the Virgin on August 15th, which is exactly the time of the disappearance of the Zodial constellation Virgo. September 8th, the date at which Virgo emerges from the sun's rays so as to be distinctly seen, is the day appointed for the observance of the nativity of the virgin Mary. The sun in his descent or passage across the equator is always represented as crucified between the two evil months of November and December. It is the constellation of the serpent, or scorpion, that ushers in the winter which afflicts the earth five months, and whose tail draws a third part of the stars of heaven.—See *Revelations XII*).

Not less susceptible of a solar interpretation are the miracles ascribed to Christ. Thus the conversion of water into wine represents the formation of the juice of the grape out of the rains by the Sun's action. The production of food, as in the extraordinary draught of fishes and the feeding of the five thousand, illustrates the Sun's fertilising influence on land and water. In the stilling of the tempest we have an example of the dependence of the weather on the Sun. It is the Sun that, by affording light, gives sight to the eye. He is the universal healer of disease, able, by darting his rays afar,

to impart renewed vitality at a distance, as in the cases of the nobleman's son and the centurion's servant. He it is that raises from the dead to new life the body buried in the ground. While in the blasting of the barren fig-tree we see the blighting effect of the Sun's heat on a feeble and rootless vegetation. The learned Spaniard Alphonso the Great truly stated that "the adventures of Jesus are all depicted in the constellations."

The Persian magicians—from whose philosophy the Jews in their captivity learned, and after their release collated their legends—accounted for the introduction of evil into the world by a fable of a serpent tempting the first woman to pluck a forbidden apple. This act, as the apple ripens late in autumn, was of course followed by the prevalence of winter, with darkness and cold—the kingdom of the Evil principle—and necessitated the adoption of clothing. The mischief thus brought about could only be remedied by the agency of the Sun, whom they identified with the principle of Good. Hence they supposed the incarnation of the Sun in the person of Mithra. This Mithra was set forth as born of a virgin in a cave at the Winter solstice, and as accompanied by a retinue of twelve persons or apostles, who represented the twelve months of the year. Having vanquished the prince of darkness, who under the guise of a serpent had seduced the woman, and having lost his life in the contest, Mithra descended into hell—or under-side of the Earth,—and at the spring equinox rose again and ascended into heaven, opening to man the gates of light, and redeeming him from the oppression of the Evil One, viz., Winter. Mithra was represented as born of a virgin because the constellation Virga was on the horizon at the time of the Sun's birth. And because the sun was at that time in the sign of Aries—then known as the ram—at the vernal equinox which governs the year, Mithra was called the lamb of God, and the lamb that takes away the evils of the world. The serpent that causes all the mischief by bringing in the winter is Scorpio, the constellation of the later Autumn. The religion founded in honor of Mithra was provided with the sacraments of baptism, penance, the eucharist, consecration, and others. Its novices were subjected to a severely ascetic regime. Chastity and virginity were accounted sacred; and it contained the doctrines of the Fall, the Incarnation, the Atonement, and the Resurrection.

Passing to Egypt we find the Sun-God Osiris, a member of a triune Godhead (evidently borrowed from the older Hindoo conception of the Trimurti), coming upon Earth for the benefit of mankind, and gifted with the titles of Manifestor of God and Revealer of Truth. Born on the 25th of December, of a divine virgin, he was persecuted and put to death by the malevolence of the Evil One, namely Winter or darkness. He was buried and rose again, and returning to heaven became the judge of all men. Such was the man-God of the Egyptians whose worship pervaded the country that gave tone and colour, if not actual birth, to the Gospels.*

Hercules, Bacchus, Apollo, Adonis, and many others, are also represented as deities who descended to man's estate to redeem mankind from evil. The coincidences in the histories of these numerous Sun-gods with that relation of Jesus are clear evidence that "the same compulsion which dominated the expression of the pagan faiths controlled also the Christian."

Chrishna, for instance, is said to have as a child instructed his teachers by his profound wisdom. He was called "Heri," which in Sanscrit means shepherd. He had a forerunner called "Rama," and a favorite disciple named "Arjuna." He repaired to the river Ganges for ablution or baptism, and retired to a desert for meditation and prayer. He washed the feet of the Brahmins in order to show deep humility. He healed lepers, raised the dead, and taught inspirational truths. On one occasion as he entered the town of Mathura, the people strewed his path with branches of cocoa-nut trees, and at another time he had a box of ointment poured over his head by a woman whom he had cured of an ailment,

* NOTE.—I have taken the liberty of adopting, in a great measure, the phraseology of Mr. Edward Maitland on this subject. See his *Keys of the Creeds*.

and to whom he is reported to have said: "Woman, I accept your sacrifice; the little which is given by the heart is of more worth than all the riches offered through ostentation." Chrishna proscribed revenge, inculcated the returning of good for evil, and taught the people love of each other, self-respect, the practice of good for its own sake, and faith in the inexhaustible goodness of God. He denounced tyranny, sympathised with the feeble, and consoled the unhappy and oppressed. He lived poor and loved the poor, declaring that they were the chosen of God. He lived chaste and inculcated chastity, as being a reasonable sacrifice on the part of all men. He came, he said, not to found a new religion, but to purify the old from all the impurities which the perverseness of man had, during many ages, gradually introduced, and to preach to the people a higher and truer conception of God and of man's destiny. Chrishna's followers believed him to be God, and according to the testimony of Hadrian, millions worshipped him as such in the time of Alexander the Great, or 350 years before the Christian era; consequently it is little to be wondered at that Christian writers, both ancient and modern, admit that the doctrines of Christianity were known to the pagans before the birth of Jesus.

The history of Jesus, between his birth and his death (as recorded in the New Testament) is merely an improved allegorical representation of the sun in his relative position to the stars and the planets in their annual journey. The case is stated very plainly in the following lines:—

"Remember then in olden times as we have said before,
The Sun was recognised as God, in all religious lore.
And often God did mean the Sun but a season's reign,
As that of Winter or of Spring,—this fact is clear and plain.
At other times a single month was set apart as one,
To represent a new-born God—a certain course to run.
Now, let us take the Sun of June, about the twenty-fourth,
When from the brightest point he went, descending from the north.
Just one degree, then he declines, and thus till Christmas morn
He shortens each succeeding day, until the Christ is born.
For then the new-born Christ, the Sun, was risen into view.
And John the Baptist had decreased his mission being through.
But Christ, the new-born Sun, still reigned, and marching on his way,
Did verify the words of John, and increased every day.

Dear christian brother thus your Christ, together with your creed,
I've proved are but a Pagan vine—a growth from Pagan seed.
And though to you Christ is the God, or God-begotten one,
He is the same old Pagan youth, the bright-eyed God—the Sun.
For Jesus is a triune name, and anciently stood thus:
The letter J supplanted I and then the *es* and *us*.
Now all of these in Pagan tongue, a single word design,
Which when combined a *trio* make denoting *one* divine.
The letter I but signified the self-existing one,
And every well trained Pagan knows that *one* to be the Sun.
The *es* and *us*, two mystic words, denoting light and fire,
Descending from the source of life—the Sun—the *holy* sire;
Who seated high among the stars, clad in his raiment bright,
Is called "The Lord"—"The Great I am" or "Jacob's Star"
"The Light."
Since light and heat proceed from Brahm, the Pagan God—the Sun,
'Tis plain you see how Christ—the Lord—is three and yet but one.
Behold him rise at early morn—at midday uppermost,
Then down at eve, and thus we have, God, Son, and, Holy Ghost.
These three positions of the Sun by Nature's wise decree,
Together form that mystic *one*, the same mysterious three.
The virgin mother of these Gods, who dwells away from Earth,
Is *Virgo* who, it seems, each year conceives—to God gives birth
And now since Christ, the christian's God, is of the Pagan line,
'Tis easy, hence, to see that he was not a God Divine."

Thus it will be perceived that the Catholics, in praying to "the Holy Virgin" are in reality praying to the constellation *Virgo*, and the Protestants in worshipping "The man Christ Jesus" are unwittingly paying adoration to the mid-day Sun. In the words of the bright spirit that is said to have appeared to John on the Island of Patmos, let me say to both:—"See thou do it not . . . worship God."

Did you ever consider that if the Bible was, as claimed

for it, divinely inspired, it is only reasonable to suppose that it would have been divinely preserved? Instead of this being the case, "there does not exist in the world a single manuscript of any portion of the Old or New Testament which is an original autograph." Theologians admit that none of the copies extant of the New Testament were written prior to the fourth century, and not two of them agree.

It is worthy of note that a Greek monk named Simonides confessed that the celebrated M.S., the *Codex Sinaiticus* (discovered in 1859 by Tischendorf in a convent on Mount Sinai, and supposed by him to have been written in the fourth century) was written by his hand at Mount Athos only a few years previously. For all we know the *Codex Vaticanus* and the *Codex Alexandrinus*, with which this *Codex Sinaiticus* are considered the three most ancient manuscripts of the Bible extant, may have had a like origin. And as to deceive and lie for the sake of piety and religion, on the ground that the end justified the means, was regarded, not as a crime, but as a virtue by the Romish priests, we are justified, I maintain, in looking upon all ancient M.S.s, referring to Christianity with very grave suspicion.

The copies of the Gospels which we possess are not written in Syriac but in Greek, and do not profess to be the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, but are said to be merely the Gospels according to these men. We have nothing to prove that there ever existed originals of these Gospels, but there is strong presumptive evidence that such originals never did exist, for had they done so the early christians would certainly have referred to them in their disputes with heretics.

That the writers of the four Gospels were unacquainted with the country about which they wrote, we have evidence in the Gospels themselves; for instance, Nazareth, which was a town in Galilee, is represented as not being in that division of Palestine. Bethlehem, which was an inland town, is represented as having coasts. In like manner Decapolis, which was an inland district, and which, according to Professor Upham, was not known before the time of Nero, who did not begin to reign before A.D. 54, is also represented as having coasts. We have also evidence in the gospels themselves that they were not written for many years after the events they refer to are supposed to have occurred; for example, after the tale about the bribing of the Roman soldiers (who are said to have guarded the tomb of the crucified Jesus) to say that they slept whilst his body was removed, it is stated, "This saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day," evidently indicating that a considerable period had elapsed between the occurrence of the events referred to and the date of writing regarding them. This story is of itself sufficient to prove the falsity of the whole affair, for it is as reasonable to believe that a British officer would order a company of English soldiers to watch the grave of a murdered Maori, as for a Roman guard to have been told off for such a purpose at the request of a few superstitious Jews; besides which, for a Roman soldier to have confessed that he slept when on guard would have been, according to Roman law instant death, therefore no bribe would have induced them to make such an admission.

When the irreconcilable differences that exist in the various books which constitute the New Testament are unbiasedly considered, its utter unreliability is evident. The accounts of the life of Jesus in the three synoptical gospels vary greatly in many points, whilst the Jesus of the gospel said to be written according to John is of a different character altogether. The latter gospel is strikingly marked throughout by elegance of language and with Platonic ideas, of which the others are devoid.

The Rev. Canon Wescott, in his "Introduction to Study of the Gospels," p. 249, admits that "It is impossible to pass from the Synoptic Gospels to that of St. John, without feeling that the transition involves the passage from one world of thought to another. . . . Nothing can destroy the contrast which exists in form and spirit between the earlier and later narratives. The difference between the fourth gospel and the Synoptics, not only as regards the teaching of Jesus, but also the facts of the narrative, is so great that it is impossible to

harmonise them . . . Both cannot be accepted as correct. If we believe that the Synoptics give a truthful representation of the life and teaching of Jesus, it follows of necessity that in whatever category we . . . place the fourth gospel it must be rejected as a historical work."

Another writer acknowledges that "the fourth Gospel, by whomsoever written, was never written by a Jew, not even a native of Palestine, the numerous geographical and topographical mistakes and blunders in names and explanations given precluding entirely such possibility; that the gospel could have never been written before the end of the second century, *i. e.*, the date assigned to Irenaeus; and that it was most probably written at the command of that personage."

It is a fact worthy of note that in Matthew and Luke two different genealogies of Jesus are given; in both of these his descent from King David is traced through Joseph, but through different sons of Solomon, and one has a great many more generations than the other. Curious enough, however, after all this trouble to prove that Jesus was descended from David, we are seriously informed that he had no earthly father at all, and that he was the maker of all things, consequently, he must have been not only the maker of his own mother, but also of that evil spirit who is said to have taken him up to the top of an exceedingly high mountain, from which one could see right round the globe, and all nations thereon. Certainly, if the Bible is divinely inspired, "God works in mysterious way." Truly might Tertullian exclaim, "I believe that which is impossible."

Even if the Gospel accounts were true regarding "the man Christ Jesus," "a prophet mighty in word and deed," he did not, I maintain, claim to be God. On the contrary, he is therein reported to have reproved a young man for even addressing him as "good master," saying "there is none good but One, that is God." If it is true that he said, "I go to my Father and to your Father, to my God and to your God," and that he exclaimed in the agonies of death, "My God! my God! why hast Thou forsaken me?" he could not have claimed to be Deity.

I may parenthetically remark that although it is generally taught that Jesus is God, there is no such assertion in the Gospels; the clergy of the various churches are therefore responsible for thus bringing the Almighty down to an equality with man, and changing the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man. I may add that the former great stronghold of Trinitarians in *I. John*, v., 7, viz., "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, and these three are one," is now admitted to be an impudent interpolation—a lie inserted by some pious hand for the purpose of supporting a holy falsehood, consequently, it is omitted in the revised edition of the New Testament; so that already this portion of the book is acknowledged to be a pious forgery, as in time the remainder will also assuredly be.

I think it was Sir Isaac Newton who declared that "the Incarnation of God is not less absurd than the Impanation of God, or God in a piece of bread." And Evanson maintained that "a virgin daughter producing her Father, and a creature giving birth to her Creator, is a blasphemous impurity." Jerome held that "those who confess the Trinity must bid farewell to science." The doctrine of the Trinity, I may observe, was an open question with the Church until the fourth century, when Athanasius unfortunately carried the day against the earnest protest of Arius. This may be taken as an illustration of how Christianity has developed.

If it is true that Jesus said, "Thy will, not mine, be done," he could not reasonably have said "The Father and I are one." If it is true that he said "The son can do nothing of himself," also, "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the son, but the Father," he could not, as represented, have "considered it not robbery to be equal with God." If it is true that he declared himself to be "the son of man," he could not surely have been the son of a ghost, holy or otherwise. If it is true that he said "Our Father which art in heaven," and further, if he is "our elder brother," then he certainly could not

be God, for if so, we would be brothers and sisters to the Infinite, instead of being His finite children, as we are. Again, if it is true that he "walked not more in Galilee, for fear of the Jews," and that he prayed three times that the cup might pass from him, he did not, as asserted, offer himself voluntarily as a sacrifice for mankind.

Did it ever occur to you that if the crucifixion of Jesus was necessary for the redemption of man from sin, why a beneficent Deity should have delayed it for so many thousands of years after Adam is said to have fallen from being a perfect saint to an outcast sinner? And if by no other name than that of Jesus Christ can men be saved, what gross injustice this would be to the millions who have never heard of such an individual? This vicarious-sacrifice doctrine or atonement through the physical death of "the man Christ Jesus," is certainly of heathen or pagan origin, for in the Hebrew Scriptures human sacrifice is strictly forbidden, and only the sacrifice of a few specified kinds of the lower animals were required to be offered by the priests to their god Jehovah, who is represented as at one time delighting in the sweet-smelling savour of roasted flesh, and at other times as abhorring their bloody sacrifices—a contrite heart being more acceptable to him.

I may here observe that outside the New Testament statements we possess no reliable evidence that such a character as the historical Jesus of the Gospels ever lived. As this assertion may be called in question, I may remark that the public archives were in possession of the Romish priests for centuries before they were destroyed, and all papers that had reference to any such person as they made out Jesus to be, would certainly have been preserved by them for the purpose of supporting their cause; also, that for upwards of a thousand years all records concerning the Christian religion were in the hands of the Romish priests, who, history informs us, caused all manuscripts which were antagonistic to their views and interests to be consigned to the flames. Among these I may mention were the works of Celsus, Porphyry, and Julian. We are also informed by history that the Fathers of the Church (as the earlier priests are termed), altered, interpolated, and even forged manuscripts in order to give to their cause the semblance of truth. The eminent Christian historian Mosheim frankly admits that during the two first centuries "forged histories of the life and doctrines of Jesus were palmed upon the world; that these histories were full of pious frauds and fabulous wonders; that they were composed by men whose intentions, perhaps, were not bad, but whose writings discovered the greatest superstition and ignorance." And he adds, "Nor was this all—productions appeared which were imposed upon the world by fraudulent men as the writings of the holy Apostles. . . . Thus they who wished to surpass all others in piety deemed it a pious act to employ deception and fraud in support of piety." With such admissions as these by one of their own cloth, and bearing in mind that all the Christian records were in the hands of such lying and unscrupulous men for more than a thousand years, I maintain that we are justified in concluding that all the boasted writings in support of the churches' claims are simply priestly forgeries. I also maintain that the ingenuity manifested by the unscrupulous Fathers of the Church to verify the fictions of their creed was in keeping with the bitterness they manifested towards philosophy, and with their persistent efforts to rule or ruin all who dared to oppose them in their audacious policy to attain supreme power through appeals to the superstitious nature of man. As has been truly remarked: "The historical life of Jesus bears the same relationship to the individual on whom it was based as does the story of Robinson Crusoe, in De Foe's celebrated romance, to the adventures of Alexander Selkirk." In other words, fantastic decorations have been added to what was simply a benevolent and self-sacrificing life, which, instead of being adorned by these tawdry embellishments, has been grossly disfigured and travestied thereby.

To prove the unreliability of the Church's evidences, let us take for example the passage in Josephus about Jesus, who was the Christ, and about the sect of Christians so named from him, which was evidently written to

support the Gospel accounts of him. Dr. Adam Clarke, the great Bible commentator, and all other candid scholars of any note, acknowledge this to be an interpolation, or inserted lie. And as it is admitted that this passage was not referred to before the 10th century by any writer, we are therefore justified in concluding that previous to that date it had no existence in the writings of Josephus.

To my mind this quotation bears the impress of falsehood on its very face, for, let me ask, is it likely that Josephus, who lived and died a Jew, would have made such a statement, which would have been tantamount to his acknowledging that he was a barefaced hypocrite, viz., a Jew by profession and a Christian by belief? It is also in direct contradiction to his statement that in his day the Jews were divided, not into four, but into three sects, viz., the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Essenes. And further, had such a character as the historical Jesus lived in Josephus's day, we may rest assured that he would not have written such a short paragraph about so important a matter when he devoted whole chapters to things of much less note.

Time will prevent my going into detail about the quotations in Tacitus, in Suetonius, and in Pliny the younger, but we may be assured that they are of a similar character to that in Josephus. I may here remark that the passage in Tacitus about the Emperor Nero having set fire to his own city, about his having persecuted the Christians for the burning thereof, and about the founder of the Christian sect having been put to death as a criminal under Pontius Pilate, are evidently cunning forgeries, for the following reasons:

Were it true that Nero in this instance acted in the manner stated, he must have been a compound of virtue and vice, of wisdom and imbecility. Then as to the asserted public crucifixion of Jesus, the Jews, it must be borne in mind, were under subjection to the Romans at the time, and by the Roman law the death penalty was never inflicted for blasphemy. Had such an accusation been made by the Jews against Jesus or anyone else, the Romans would certainly have laughed them to scorn, and if the charge of treason had been made against him he would have been entitled, by the Roman law, to a fair trial before the governor, who, however, had no authority to pass sentence of death for such an offence. This was reserved to the Emperor, before whom, on appeal, those found guilty were entitled to appear. In all cases when Jewish laws conflicted with those of Rome they were as a matter of course annulled. I may further add that there is no valid proof that the Roman Empire instituted, or even tolerated violence against any nation because of its religious belief; much less concern itself about the private opinions of individuals or sects. On the contrary it was the policy of Rome to acknowledge all gods as sacred, and it was only when this principle was violated or when the worship of the gods was interfered with, that the authority of the Empire was put in force. It is, in fact, the height of folly to suppose that the vast Empire of Rome, in which religious toleration was granted to all sects and individuals of which it was composed, should single out for persecution the humble Jesus or his followers, or seek to enforce the doctrines of the Jews, or of any other religion, upon them. Is it not more probable, from the admissions of Mosheim and others, that these tales were concocted by unscrupulous writers of a subsequent period, who, to perpetuate their priestly power over the people, fabricated a new religion, and sought to substantiate its claims by mutilations of the records, and wholesale defamation of the character of men who lived before their religion had an existence, and who consequently never heard of their religious ideas.

The learned author of "Primitive Church History" states: "One thing is certain, namely, that outside the Church there does not appear to be any trace of the Christians prior to the persecution of them A.D. 249 ordered by Decius." And Judge Strange writes: "The Jewish historians (as I have endeavoured to show), by their silence exclude the possibility of the Christian movement having taken effect in the first century of the asserted Christian era; and the testimony of the reputed

Christian authors must be considered, in a historical point of view, as an absolute blank to the reign of Commodus, or for a hundred and fifty years from the asserted death of Christ." Another writer remarks, "Christianity had no existence under that name for over two centuries after the ascribed date of its inception. It was purposely made obscure in the records during the first three centuries; and it emerged from its obscurity in such varied guises that it was hardly recognisable as an organisation in different parts of the Roman Empire until the time of Constantine the Great."

The assertion that Pontius Pilate transmitted to Tiberius the Roman emperor a memorial regarding the actions and death of Jesus is simply a cunning fabrication, for had such a memorial existed it would most certainly have been preserved, and would have been quoted by the early Church Fathers as proof of his career in their disputations with those heretics who denied that such an individual as Jesus ever existed except as a phantom. I am aware that to those who, like Paul, are determined not to know anything "save Jesus Christ and Him crucified," whether true or false, these arguments will have little weight, but it is otherwise with all who prefer truth to fiction.

As to the letter by Pliny to Trajan and Trajan's reply, these are evidently spurious writings, for, as far as we possess any evidence, it was not the custom of Roman governors to write such letters to their emperors.

Then as to the accounts given of Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, Clement, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Papius, Ireneus, Tertullian, etc., in connection with the Christian religion, the finding of the holy cross and sepulchre by Helena the mother of Constantine and the localities of the asserted sacred places at Jerusalem, these were evidently all fabrications by the priests for the purpose of supporting their falsities and of giving an appearance of reliability to their fraudulent statements.

These fabrications were similar to one referred to by Lecky, who writes: "St. Augustine mentions that in his time (the fifth century), there was no authentic portrait of Christ, and that the type of features was still undetermined, so that we have absolutely no knowledge of his appearance. . . . The type, however, was soon afterwards found." I may add "this was done that it might be fulfilled what was spoken by the priests," etc.

Let us now turn our attention to the Biblical statements regarding Jesus. The prophecies said to apply to him are found, when unprejudicially examined, to bear no reference to him, and in this I am corroborated by the Jews, who should certainly be the best interpreters of their own scriptures. The miracles ascribed to Jesus, and which are supposed to bear evidence of his divinity, are far surpassed by those recorded as having been performed by some of the old Testament celebrities. Take for example the exceeding great army of skeletons, or dry bones, that through the prophet Ezekiel were raised to life again, which puts the story of Lazarus's resurrection completely into the shade. (See Ezekiel xxxvii, 1-10). The stopping the course of the sun, or more correctly, of the diurnal revolution of the earth by Joshua, far excels the staying of the tempest by Jesus, for the latter might have been a mere coincidence, whereas the former could not be so, as such an occurrence is unprecedented and would have been a truly marvellous feat, for it would have disorganized the whole order of Nature.

The fable of the miraculous conception of Mary was only one of numerous current similar tales that were believed in by the ignorant in these superstitious times. No intelligent Jew, however, would then have accepted as a truth any more than they would now, the idea of a virgin-born Son of God, and so absurd a fiction as this (which is on a par with that of Jupiter and Danae), can only be believed in by people whose judgments have been warped before they were able to exercise their reasoning faculties. And this fiction could only have retained its sway over educated minds from its having been cunningly interwoven with the purest code of morals, with a few exceptions, that has ever been presented to the world. Not that any moral teachings in the New Testament had not been inculcated previously in the various religious systems, but that the brightest gems of truth were

selected therefrom and embodied in the so-called Christian Scriptures. Buckle writes: "That the system of morals professed by the New Testament contained no maxim which had not been previously enunciated, and that some of the most beautiful passages therein are quotations from Pagan authors, is well known to every scholar; but to assert that Christianity communicated to man moral truth previously unknown argues on the part of the assertor either gross ignorance or else wilful fraud." I may mention that in *Acta* there is a quotation from the Grecian poet Aratus. In *Titus* there is one from Epimenides, and in *Corinthians* one from the *Thain* of Menander. Such facts speak for themselves.

As to the story of the massacre by Herod of all the children under a certain age, all history outside the Gospels is silent regarding it, therefore we are justified in concluding that this is but a plagiarism from the life of the Hindoo Lord and Saviour, Chrishna Jezus; who lived many centuries before the Christian era commenced, in which a similar tale is recorded, and of which there is a very ancient representation cut in the rock at the cave of Elephanta in Hindostan.

Having already disposed of the trial and crucifixion of Jesus by Pontius Pilate, I shall pass on to his so-called resurrection. Here again we have only the gospel accounts to rely upon, and as not two of these agree upon the leading incidents connected therewith, we may with confidence discard them as totally unreliable.

To sum up what I have said, Christianity is evidently but a new form of religious expression fabricated by the priests of the Roman Empire during the two first centuries, out of the truths as well as the myths of antiquity, with which they cunningly interwove doctrines to suit their own purposes. It is, in fact, reformed Paganism, and was promulgated as a new revelation, in which Jesus was represented as the new Sun-god revealed in the flesh, in whom was combined the whole catalogue of virtues as the earthly representative of divine power, all the essential ideas of the old religions being preserved in allegories in the new. Thus the Christian religion supplanted Ancient Greek and Roman Paganism in the home of its nativity, which was not Judea as is generally but erroneously supposed. This accounts for the Gospels having been written in Greek instead of in the language of the men according to whom they were ingeniously ascribed. I may add that between the priesthood of the various nations there existed a secret method of intercourse, the esoteric meaning of their different scriptures being similar, therefore the worship of their various gods was the same in its nature, consequently it was an easy matter for the priests of those days to combine the legends of the numerous Pagan gods in their new Judean Apollo, and under his name, unite the religious worship of all sects. That the Church Fathers studied Grecian philosophy, we have the authority of Clement who declared that philosophic culture was necessary in order to develop Christianity in a scientific form. (See Neander's "History of Dogmas," page 63.)

All unprejudiced students of Greek and Hebrew mythology must admit that the birth, life, and death of Jesus, as represented in the Gospels, are more in accordance with Grecian ideas than with Judaism.

That Christianity was an evolution, and not, as is claimed for it, a revelation, is evident to all who are not afraid to use their reason, and he who believes that the Supreme Power (who is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever) hath spoken by the mouth of priest or prophet, in any age of the world, is simply a victim of superstition and of false ideas. He, also, who feareth that divine vengeance will abide on him if he refuses obedience to a church, priest, or book, hath not yet found that liberty which inherently belongs to every soul as a divine birthright.

That there is a gigantic error at the base of their faith any one who will unbiasedly examine the matter will soon discover. This error is the greatest misfortune that has befallen Christendom, for it has caused religious stagnation, consequently it has been the chief hindrance to spiritual enlightenment. "The story of the Cross" may be very affecting, and "faith in the Lord Jesus Christ" may have a very attractive sound in the ears of those who

from infancy have been accustomed to associate it with everything that is good and holy, but if these are not in accord with truth, but if these are not in accord with truth, let me ask, are they? Let us rather, as rational and accountable beings, listen to the voice of God within us, and repose full confidence in His infinite love, justice, and mercy. Therefore

Trust not in faith or foolish creeds,
Blood ne'er will whitewash wicked deeds;
But let your actions always be

Based on that Truth which makes man free.

Christianity and religion are popularly but erroneously viewed as synonymous terms; the one is a belief, the other a life—the one is a delusion, the other a reality.

"Truth is immortal, and shall live;
Truth is mortal, and shall die."

The influx of light in our day has already begun to sound the death-knell to mental bondage to superstition, and to the exercise of priestly authority over the intellect and conscience. Ere long our Christian brethren of all sects and denominations, instead of worshipping an ideal embodiment of goodness (however exalted) and trusting to any creed or in any form of worship to ensure future blessedness, will join with us in seeking knowledge and truth, from whatever source derivable, and will follow them wheresoever they lead, giving of their store plenteously to their less fortunate brethren, for in this way alone can we serve God, and secure happiness here and hereafter. Yea, the time is approaching when men will not, in their devotion to their anthropomorphic God, forget their duties to each other, as unfortunately is still too commonly done. Then all creedal bonds shall be dissolved, and man thereby be enabled to rise to a higher conception of God, who is infinite love, and to a better knowledge of life and of the glorious destiny which eventually awaits every human soul. May the day soon arrive

"When all shall lend a willing ear
To doctrines new and still untried,
And pause awhile ere they condemn
These holy truths as yet undescribed."

** Copies of the above can be obtained in pamphlet form at the office of this paper. The proceeds from the sale thereof are to be applied to the assistance of a brother spiritualist in great distress.

In the *North Eastern Ensign* of April 25th, Dr. Rohner gives a glaring instance of the evils of "Inoculation" which recently came under his notice, a previously healthy infant having been transformed into a miserable and apparently incurable cripple by its effects.

Miss Elma Ward, of Hobart Town, sends us an account of the spontaneous development of spiritual clairvoyance in two children of 11 and 14 years of age, the eldest of whom is also impressed to write short poems. We have not seen a specimen of them, but our informant speaks eulogistically of their beauty.

VICTORIAN ASSOCIATION OF SPIRITUALISTS. The Sunday evening meetings of the above association have been well attended lately, and an active interest in the proceedings exhibited by the audiences. In consequence of a very general desire expressed at the conclusion of Mr. Browne's lecture, last Sunday was appropriated for its discussion. An animated debate was the result, but very little was elicited in contravention of Mr. Browne's position. Next Sunday Mrs. Sterry will deliver an address in trance.

A DEBATE between Mr. Robert White and Mr. Thomas Walker, on the question—"That Theism is Superior to Atheism in meeting the intellectual and moral requirements of Mankind," has just been concluded in Sydney. Mr. White was formerly a Secularist, but after proper investigation of the facts became a Spiritualist. His former connection with Secularism, however, in "the literature of which he is well read, and with many of the leaders of which he has been personally acquainted," peculiarly fitted him to combat the stock arguments of his opponent. The debate seems to have created a great deal of interest, especially on the third night, when the Socratic method of question and answer was adopted. Lack of space unfortunately prevents our referring more at length to the subject, but the debate is fully reported in the *Sydney Liberal*.

THE EXPERIENCES OF AN INVESTIGATOR
INTO THE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.

By G. S. C.

THROUGH the pages of sacred and profane history runs a thread of spiritual light that never for a moment has lost its brightness through the long vista of ages in which humanity has trod; angels and spiritual beings are spoken of in the Vedas of India, the sacred books of China, in the traditions of the red men of North America, and black men of the African continent. Our Bible teems with spiritual things; angels, in their angelic beauty, cheering poor humanity with missions from a higher power, are met with on page after page of the book held reverent by millions as the work of the Great Spirit, and yet in spite of the grand array of evidence that is possible to be adduced of the spiritual world's intercourse with man, in spite of the records of every nation and of every tongue, that angelic beings have visited our earth, the world will not believe that what has occurred in ages past can and is still occurring now. Angels and spirits still come—still hold intercourse with men—still hold out the hand of everlasting love—still tell him of the bright hereafter, and the futurity of life, leading our thoughts and aspirations upward and onward through the eternity of ages, yet to be unfolded. All men could possess the knowledge that there is a life to come. Materialism, with its cold dead face, would hide itself behind the walls of besotted ignorance, never again to trample on the holiest feelings implanted in the mind of man were the belief that there is a life continuously with this after death, made knowledge. To aid my fellow man, I will try to tell in simple language the story of my search. The mode and means whereby I gathered up the bright jewels with which our paths are strewed, and how I know as far as man can know, that you and I and every one on this fair orb can never die, but only change their state of being, and by that change, progress.

My life has to the present time been passed in the occupation of a miner, and being so, I have found that a feeling of self-reliance is naturally the outcome of a life so free. Whatever innate qualities he may possess, certain it is the orthodox religious element does not enter very largely into his composition, although a more moral or intellectual body of men, taken as a class, does not exist than the gold-miner of the Australian fields. Political or religious questions are met and argued in a spirit that shows great diversity of thought and penetration. Mixing with such men from my earliest years, I naturally imbibed some of the ideas I heard around me, although at the same time my own mind is such, I am proud to say, that wants to know the "why and wherefore" before it will accept as a truth anything that cannot be demonstrated as a fact, by proof, in some shape or another.

It being so, the question of Modern Spiritualism, with its attendant phenomena, could not in any way be accepted until I had searched for years with varied success, sometimes obtaining evidence of a character that was almost conclusive as to the truth of the spirit of man being able to return to earth, and also as to the truth of the life after death; and then something would intervene and throw some doubt on what I had received. Still, without a qualm of any moment, or being disheartened by my seeming failure, I would try some other path, until at last I found evidence of such a character, so overwhelming in its intensity, so utterly outside the domain of fraud, that I can say with the confidence born of investigation, I can say to the Materialist and skeptic and the hundred and one opponents of our beautiful knowledge—for we *know*—that we do *not* die; the grave is not our home; death does not end our life, but only changes its form, and robes it in the garments of the world to come.

How such a consummation was reached as gave me irrefragable proofs, I will now explain:—

It was in the year 1878, that hearing a great deal of the marvels of Modern Spiritualism, my

curiosity was excited, and being made aware of the fact that Dr. Müller of Yackandandah, a township lying about sixteen miles in a north-eastern direction from Beechworth, had been investigating for a number of years, I called upon him, and in the course of our conversation I gathered from him that he had at different times attended the séances of Mr. Robert Brown, the medium for the direct voice, at Barnawatha. And what he told me relative to the phenomena that occurred in Mr. Brown's presence, and also as to the mode and conditions under which the phenomena were obtained, combined with the different events that transpired, made me anxious to know more of the matter.

The Dr. also told me of the evidence he obtained through the mediumship of Charles Foster, when that gentleman was in Melbourne, relative to the death of a beloved sister in Germany, and how all that transpired, having any connection with her decease; the time, etc., was subsequently verified by letters received after the sitting with Foster. Of course that was great proof to the Dr.; it was a revelation to him, but it was no revelation to me. I must search for myself. I, therefore, as the first step to obtain the evidence I sought, obtained some books on Spiritualism, kindly lent me by him: Crooke's "Investigation into the Phenomena called Spiritualism," with one or two of Varley's and Wallace's on the same subject. I read them carefully; stored away the facts they adduced; but yet I could not believe on the evidence of other men; I did not for one moment doubt the truth of their statement; the whole affair was too wonderful, too much outside the domain of ordinary life to be grasped in a day, week, or year, without the facts being substantiated by actual experience. The statement as told by William Crookes, scientist as he is, and one of the leaders in the broad field of scientific research, could not be accepted by me. As to the spirit of a young girl who had died scores of years before coming back in a materialised form, and playing with his children in his own drawing-room, telling them and him as to the adventures she had passed through during her life in India—the whole affair was too startling, too much outside our general experience to be accepted by ordinary minds. I could not doubt the honesty of his convictions as to its truth; it may have occurred—that and the other marvels he and Wallace and Varley tell of—I could not say, I could not contradict; I knew nothing whatever about the matter. But I firmly resolved in my own mind that if I could solve the riddle as to the existence of man after death, I would devote some of the time I had on earth to the subject.

My first experience in which anything notable occurred was on one very wet day in the year 1879. I and a sister-in-law and my wife were sitting down, engaged in conversation; my wife at the same time was using a small hand sewing-machine. Our conversation was about Spiritualism, and its attendant phenomena. I said, "Mary (my sister-in-law's name), I wonder if you and I were to hold a pencil on a slate, whether we would get anything—any writing? Will you try with me?" She smiled, in fact we all laughed at the idea. However I got a slate pencil and down we both sat on a sofa, the slate on my knees and holding the pencil with our hands—her right and my left—on the slate. After a few minutes the pencil commenced to make circles and zigzag lines over the surface of the slate. This continued for a length of time, at last, out of desperation, I asked if "it" could write, and in answer thereto the word "Yes" was written. I very naturally thought that Mary wrote the word, and no doubt she was under the impression that it was me. However, I again asked "Would you please tell us who you are?" and much to my surprise it wrote, after a short interval, the name "George Murphy." "And who the deuce is George Murphy?" "Do you know, Mary?" "No, I don't know." Addressing it, I said, "We don't know you." "Yes you do," it again wrote. "Who does?" "C.—" (the name of my wife) it again wrote. Addressing my wife I said, "Do you know anything of a George Murphy?" "No." "Yes you do," was again written. "You know George Woods who lived in Hanover-street, Sheffield." My wife re-

membered then about a lad who went by the name of George Murphy, he being the illegitimate son of a woman of the name last mentioned, but who being adopted at a very early age by a gentleman and his wife of the name of Woods, went by the name of George Woods. He also wrote that he had married and had left a family of two children, and that he had died nine years previous. All this was subsequently verified in the course of time. I knew nothing of George Woods or Murphy, in fact how should I know? I never was in England, and I never heard of the individual in question. Mary was as ignorant as myself in all appertaining to the subject; in fact, it was without a doubt one of the clearest cases of proven identity on the part of a spirit that I ever met with, and as such made a very powerful impression on my mind as to the truth of spirit communion with mortals.

It was through the mediumship of this same girl that I discovered the mediumship of my eldest daughter, then a girl of about ten years. A spirit by the name of Annie Wright, who had died near where I and my family reside, wrote through my sister-in-law that my daughter was a medium, and that if I would take the trouble to develop her mediumship she would become a very powerful one. I must confess I doubted very much the truth of this. Nothing in my daughter's looks, eyes, or general appearance would lead anyone to suppose she was a medium. However, I devoted one evening a week towards her development, and in the course of a very short time a spirit by the name of Elizabeth used to write different automatic communications, the writing being obtained by the medium merely holding the pencil on the slate, and letting it go in whatever way or manner the spirit controlling the hand might see fit.

My little daughter Annie dying about this time, we used to receive communications, written through my eldest daughter's hand by "Elizabeth," from her. They one and all breathed a spirit of love to us. The communications were of a character that gave comfort and cheered the mourning minds of those left behind; and we one and all felt that our Annie was still with us, although to bodily sight invisible. I used to ask her questions relative to her sister's mediumship. She often wrote that the spirits were fully aware that F. (the initial letter of my eldest daughter's name) would be, if developed, a powerful medium. I often asked, could Annie give to her sister the writing known as "direct?" "No, she could not give it, nor could 'Elizabeth,'" but, she wrote, "I will try and get a good strong spirit to come with me, and do the best we can for F."

My eldest daughter's mediumship did not make much progress for some months, until one evening in the month of September 1879. She was doing her lessons for the next day's schooling, on the opposite side of the table from where I was sitting, when suddenly looking up she said to me, "I can't do my lesson, dadda, my hand shakes so. See!" I looked and saw that her hand was moving about in a very peculiar manner. Instantly surmising what was the matter, I said to F., "Clean the slate and let us see what will be written." Having done so, she held the pencil on it, and instantly was written, "Good evening, sir; your little daughter Annie has brought me here to give you the 'direct' writing, whatever that is." It appeared from the tone of what was written that the spirit communicating did not know what was meant by the term "direct writing." I explained so far as I possibly could, I, having obtained whatever knowledge I possessed on the subject from the Spiritualistic literature of the present day, notably that most having reference to Dr. Slade's mediumship, and the phenomena in connection therewith. Seeming to understand my explanation, the spirit signified its willingness to try the experiment. I having placed a small grain of pencil on the cleaned slate gave it to F., who under my instructions placed the slate under the table, holding it with the small grain of pencil on it by the right hand, while the left hand lay on the top of the table. A bright fire was burning at the same time in the fireplace, and a lighted candle on the table. Having held the slate for a few minutes, it was pushed out, and F. taking up a pencil—

one laying on the top of the table in her hand, and placing it on the slate there was written, "I think I can do it; I will try to tomorrow night."

The next evening our experiment was again renewed, with results far exceeding my most sanguine expectations; for F. having placed the slate, previously cleaned by me, and on which I had placed a small crumb of pencil, under the table it was after a few moments forcibly pushed out by some unseen force; and, on being examined, a small mark, about a quarter of an inch long, and in the centre of the slate, was seen to have been made. Pleased at even obtaining so small a result, I again cleaned the slate, and on it being again pushed out the word "if" was written. Being again put under the table, the words at each experiment were written, such as "Slate," "difficult," with other words that I cannot now remember; but the last that was written on that eventful evening was, "Annie is quite well; do not tell anyone I gave you the direct writing. Good night."— "Jane Nixon."

Wondrous as was the phenomena obtained that evening, it was totally eclipsed by what transpired the following night: Slate after slate was filled with writing, on both sides. No trouble seemed to be experienced by the spirit in writing, and as the night went on it wrote, "Put two slates under the table, one in each hand of the medium." We did so, and on the slates being pushed out, after a very short interval, we found that both the upper and lower sides of the slates were filled with writing in close continuous lines. Not having entered the communications that were written in my diary, I cannot now tell what were the words or the subject treated, more than it was relative to the life after death, and how beautiful to the spirit is the summer-land: the words I am sorry I did not retain. At the end of every communication the Christian name of the spirit was always written "Jane," and sometimes the whole name, "Jane Nixon." All this occurred in the presence of myself and one or two friends at times.

What I have tried to describe went on for some time, until at last, to vary the phenomena if possible, I asked the control whether there was any possibility of her giving a print of her hand, for I was under the impression that the method in which the direct writing was done by the spirit was by materialising a hand or portion of a hand, that is, a finger and thumb to hold the crumb of pencil with which the spirit wrote. Having obtained the answer, "I will try," I obtained a plate—a common dinner plate—and having filled it with flour to the extreme edge, I smoothed the surface of the flour with a knife, so that the slightest impression of anything foreign could be seen. I then requested the medium to sit at the table in such a position as the whole of her person would be away from the table with the exception of the hand that would hold the plate under the table. She having done so I placed the plate in her hand, being held by the fingers under the plate and the thumb over the edge. She then passed the plate under the table, and we waited for a short time, when out came the plate with the print of fingers. Again and again we tried, until at last, the print of a hand was clearly indented in the flour. I invariably examined the hand of the medium to convince myself whether there was any flour in or on her hand, but I never found the slightest trace, and make assurance doubly sure I often did so in subsequent sittings. The following evening I greased her hands with lard; still the print of the hand would appear on the surface of the flour, but not a speck on the hand of the medium.

Of course this was remarkably satisfactory. No explanation outside of the spiritual would meet the case, as far as I can in any way discern. The print of the hand was there and the medium's hand had no trace of flour. The lard on her hand was in the same state as when I greased it. I was satisfied as to the genuineness of the phenomena in regard of that phase.

After an interval of some few weeks, I one evening asked her control whether there was any possibility of her giving a mould of her hand in wax, or what was much better, paraffine. The answer was again, "I will try." I at the earliest opportunity wrote down to Mel-

bourne to Mr. Terry, telling him of my researches, as also what was my intention to try and obtain, telling him at the same time what I needed, viz., paraffine. Mr. Terry having obtained the paraffine sent it up to me as soon as he possibly could ; and I having read in the Spiritualistic literature how and what manner the moulds of hands and feet, with casts of faces, had been obtained through different media in England, sought to obtain the moulds in the same manner from our spirit-friend. Accordingly I placed a bucket containing boiling water with sufficient paraffine floating on the surface under the table ; and alongside the bucket of boiling water I placed a bucket of cold water. Having made all arrangements, I requested the medium to sit up to the table and to place her hand (the left) on the top, while the right hand was held under the flap of the table. After varied success, from obtaining little pieces like the moulds of the tips of fingers, the height of the experiment was reached by obtaining no less than *twenty-seven moulds* in one evening, some of them reaching as high as the narrow part of the wrist, and a number of them being stuffed full of flowers. All these moulds were obtained in the light, that is, a candle burning on the table all the time. I very often examined the hand of the medium, but could never find any trace of water or paraffine. Moreover, I experimented myself : after the water containing the paraffine had cooled enough to warrant my placing my hand in it, I have dipped it in, and after obtaining a coating of sufficient thickness, have tried my utmost to slip my hand out of the mould without using the other hand to aid me, and I must confess I found it a perfect impossibility on my part to do it ; besides, I found it very painful, for the hairs on the hand would of course stick to the paraffine, and the result was that I had a difficulty I had not dreamt of to get rid of the paraffine.

After those experiments a short time elapsed, when one evening, in the presence of my wife, myself, and family, F. all of a moment commenced dancing the "Highland Fling"—a dance she had no idea of,—the fingers were snapped, arms thrown into the same positions, and the feet moved with the grace and skill of a practised dancer.

But startling as was the phenomena I have spoken of, the summit was reached one bright sunshiny Saturday afternoon. I had been up to the reservoir to see what quantity of water was in it, and on my way back to the claim I called in the house for a drink of tea. No sooner had I stepped over the threshold than my wife addressing me said, "Jane is here, and wants to give the 'direct,'" I said, "I cannot stop long." Taking up a slate that was on the table, I cleaned it, and placing a grain of pencil on it I gave it to the medium, who instantly placed it under the flap of the table ; but no sooner had she done so when it was forced out and poised on the tips of the fingers of her right hand, and then she was by some power *pushed out*, if I may use such a term, of the front door into the verandah, my wife and I following, the medium still holding the slate on the tips of her fingers, while the arm was extended above her head as far as it would reach ; and then with no person present in bodily shape, or visible to our physical eyes, we heard the pencil moving on the slate, as though writing, without mortal contact, and on the slate being brought down from its elevated position we found the following written: "God bless you, dadda, mamma, Fanny, and Florence ; I love you all.—Annie C.—" Annie, I mentioned before, was the name of a little girl of mine who passed away at the age of five years and four months.

It is needless for me to say anything further ; the fact of spirit intercourse is too apparent in the foregoing. How true it is—

" They do not die,
Nor lose their mortal sympathies,
Nor change to us, although they change."

I have received a great number of messages in the "direct" since, all breathing a spirit of happiness and unbroken love to those that are left behind. Is not the knowledge that when we pass the portals of the tomb our loved ones will meet us in the bright and glorious

summer-land ? Is not such knowledge better than the brightest jewels that ever decked the crowns of kings ?—

"Oh what were life, if life were all ! Thine eyes
Are blinded by their tears, or thou wouldst see
Thy treasures wait thee in the azure skies,
And Death, thy friend, will give them all to thee.

A NEW PLANET.

ALLEGED DISCOVERY THROUGH SPIRIT-AGENCY.

DR. BABBITT (author of "Principles of Light and Color, and their application in the cure of disease,") writing to the Banner of Light, says—"Before closing, I want to say that my spirit-guides have announced to me the existence of a very distant and wonderful world, far beyond the orbit of Neptune, which, as my readers will remember, is the most distant planet of which the astronomers at present have any knowledge. It is described as having no moon, as being several times the size of our earth, with a year equal to between two and three of our centuries. It is said to be by far the ripest and oldest world of the solar system, while the development of the people, so far as material worlds are concerned, is probably the most marvellous thing that has ever entered the conception of man. For a number of weeks back I have been receiving, through my hand telegraph, accounts of that world, its institutions, its society, its homes, its mechanics, its methods of travel, of living, eating, sleeping, etc., purporting to be given by two exalted spirits, a male and a female, who have come from that world itself. As I have been under the guidance of Dr. Elliotson's spirit for many years back, and have never been able to detect the least sign of deception or falsehood in him or in other spirits whom he has permitted to address me, and especially as the description thus given is probably the most complete and beautiful portrayal of a perfect world ever presented to mankind, I have every reason to believe in its thorough truthfulness. Dr. Elliotson is of the opinion that astronomers will discover this planet before the close of this century."

COMPULSORY VACCINATION.

ONE of the most complete works published in connection with this subject has just come to hand, from the pen of Mr. W. Tebb. It contains a formidable array of facts and figures under the heading "Vaccination in the Workhouses—in the Public Schools—in the Post Office—in the Police Force—the Army—the Navy—in Prisons—in Life Assurance—and amongst Emigrants." The book is entitled "Compulsory Vaccination in England, with incidental references to Foreign States." The uncompromising attitude adopted in opposition to what he calls the "Vaccination rite" —fully justified by the mass of particulars concerning the practical working of the Vaccination Acts so industriously collected—is indicated in the opening remarks. "It has been said of old that there is no deeper injustice than that which is committed in the name of the law, and it may be added that with, perhaps, the possible exception of the Fugitive Slave Law of America, there has been no law passed by any English-speaking Legislature, so unreasonable in its theory, and so hard hearted in its practice, as the existing Vaccination Law of the British Empire." The evidence adduced at the Public Inquiry at Norwich, in the month of June, 1882, shows that four deaths, and five cases of serious injury to children previously in perfect health, were the results of the operation of a qualified vaccinator of 27 years' experience, who had been twice rewarded by Government for efficient vaccination. In one of the fatal cases, the mother testified before the Commissioners that she had previously lost a child by the same Parliamentary rite in 1875. Can any greater cruelty be imagined than an avowedly unscientific law, which compels a parent to submit a second child to the dreaded operation, having already had her hearth made desolate by a former submission ?

The particulars furnished under the different headings enumerated above form a perfect armory for those who desire to fortify themselves on this subject. The opinions and experiences of prominent men are quoted ; statistical tables are given taken bodily from official reports ; the

shameful way in which reluctant parents, possessed of a repugnance to the operation—the natural outcome of a piteous experience—are dragooned and hunted to the Vaccination Stations is laid bare; facts gleaned from personal interviews with policemen, soldiers, and sailors, (amongst whom the operation is the most rigidly carried out), but commonly suppressed by the medical profession, are brought to light; instances of vaccino-syphilis: while a graphic picture, from an eye witness, of the process of performing the rite on board an emigrant ship, has features which rouse the mingled indignation and disgust of the reader. The text of the nine anti-vaccination resolutions passed by the Executive Committee of the International Anti-Vaccination League, at the Congress held at Paris in 1880, at which delegates representing France, Belgium, Holland, Prussia, Württemberg, Switzerland, England, and the United States, were present is given, with many other important items. The fallacy of depending for protection against small pox upon vaccination from the calf—now rather popular in Melbourne—is also shown.

MODERN SPIRITUALISM.

The following beautiful inspirational poem was received lately by Mr. H. J. Browne from Mrs. E. S. Watson, of San Francisco, in fulfilment of a promise made to him by that lady before leaving Victoria. Mrs. Watson states that it has never been published, and gives him permission to make what use of it he likes. Mr. Browne thinks he cannot do better than let it appear in the columns of the *Harbinger*, for the benefit of Mrs. Watson's many admirers as being an earnest and gifted writer in the cause of progress.

Again a glorious star we see
Above life's shadow-shrouded hills ;
The heavens outpour Love's melody,
And all the world with promise thrills ;
Our lives illumined like the morn
Declare another truth is born !

From ghastly depths of doubt and woe
Our souls are summoned to ascend,
And now behold our last great foe
Hath proven universal friend !
O, Death we have no fear of thee ;
O, Grave where is thy victory !

No more our eager eyes shall turn
To bygone ages for the light,
The Altars of the present burn
With sacred fire as holy-bright.
To all mankind God's pledge is given,
His truth alone can lead to Heaven !

The dead already made alive,
Now give us greeting face to face,
And with our doubting spirits strive
To fill their dear, accustomed place ;
No more Love's treasures lie entombed,
"Death's dark" with countless stars hath bloomed.

And as the chains from Peter fell
In presence of the Angel power,
So dread of death and fear of hell
Do lesser grow each day and hour ;
Wherever angel feet have trod
There springs a purer trust in God.

The hills of time are touched with flame
Foretelling splendours yet to be,
And swelling songs anew proclaim
The truth of immortality.
Not "Christ" alone hath burst his prison
For all the dead alike are risen.

The "rustling wing" once heard afar,
Now broods us with a soft caress ;
The "glimmer of a distant star" —
Now thrills us with love's tenderness :
And to each angel-guarded home
The promised "comforter" hath come.

The seas are bridged with snowy soil
And space annulled by electric fire ;
The planets weighed in mortal scale
And Heaven o'erleaped by heart's desire ;
Until at last we hold impared
This precious truth of all the world !

There is one God supremely good,
To whom the universe belongs,
And when His laws are understood
We shall no longer suffer wrongs ;
And death is out a gate-way grand
That leadeth to Love's Morning Land !

The *Philosophic Inquirer* (Madras) has given considerable space to Theosophy lately, and in a recent number, speaking of the Theosophical Society and its founders, it says:—"In fact, no Society existing on earth has the good and intellectual progress of India so much at heart as the Theosophical one, and no two beings have worked more truly for the intellectual elevation of India's sons, in the short period of five years, than Madame H. P. Blavatsky, and Col. H. S. Olcott. Of Madame Blavatsky's unique mental calibre, of her varied, extensive, and almost encyclopedic knowledge of all sciences, of her familiarity with all the ancient mystic-lore, of her transcending occult powers and of her large heart, no eulogy will be needed from our poor, humble pen. But one who has closely studied her, reveres her the more than merely admires. Of Col. Olcott, it can be said in short that he is the very Life of the Society. He is a gentleman of the best scientific culture, possessed equally of a large heart, whose vast labors are solely devoted to the higher intellectual status of India and her sons of the present generation. This one man has worked more for the Theosophical Society than any other leader has done for another Society, with the single exception of Bradlaugh in England. He has been untiringly and but too zealously lecturing for the past five years upon various important themes in all prominent cities of India and Ceylon, with one object,—the formation of a universal brotherhood of mankind, with one aim,—the development of psychic powers in man. His eloquence is of a very high order; really incomparable in India. It is polished, sublime and pure." The editor however is evidently not prepared to accept the Occult Philosophy in its entirety, for in the concluding portion of a review of "Esoteric Buddhism" he says, "We decline in all honesty to swallow the Esoteric Pill so nicely gilded by Mr. Sinnet." This paper is avowedly a Freethought one, and more deserving of the name than many of its contemporaries. Some of its readers have apparently found fault with it on account of its admitting matters pertaining to the occult or spiritual; this has called forth a noble leader entitled "What is Freethought" which if space permits we shall reproduce in our next.

An uneducated collier boy called "Dick the pit lad," who appears to be an excellent mesmeric subject, is astonishing skeptics by his undoubted clairvoyant powers whilst in that state. He is at present appearing under the auspices of the Metropolitan Spiritual Lyceum, London, and a short time since he successfully read the number of a cheque under the strictest test conditions, his eyes being gummed and plastered over and finally covered with a thick bandage and the operator being kept in ignorance of the number, which contained six figures.

The *Atlantic Monthly*, one of the ablest among American Magazines, has a notice of some recent books which belong to Spiritualism. The writer calls his article the "Annexation of Heaven," and speculates whether the abnormal activity of Spiritualist writers means "a new domain of literature—that Heaven is to be annexed to earth in literary art." I am concerned to point to his conclusion, which is curious:—"If literature," he says, "is ever to engage in the occupations of the other world, it must first believe in it, and then use its imagination to expand the known properties. If it merely hauls into boundless space the baggage of this world, it is pretty sure to lose its way and reach no definite end. For forty years or so we have had by our doors a mass of printed matter, which is witness to the struggle of human minds after a special and temporal representation of the life after death. All this while there has been a rapid movement in theology and philosophy, which tends to destroy the delusive notion that eternity is merely a prolongation of time. These books which we have cited have caught a breath from the higher philosophy, and it is that which gives them any value." The books cited are Mrs. Oliphant's "Little Pilgrim"; Miss Phelps' "Beyond the gates"; and one that is new to me, W. M. Baker's "A Blessed St. Certainty: a Parable of the Better Country."—Light.

To Correspondents.

Communications intended for this Journal should be written legibly, and on one side of the paper only.

T. ANDREWS.—Your letter received. *The Harbinger* assumes the facts of Spiritualism proved, but is constantly giving evidence to those who have not yet reached conviction, besides enlarging the knowledge of those who have. We cannot expect the varied contributions we publish will please all readers. What one appreciates another condemns, but most people interested in Spiritualism will find something in harmony with their ideas in our columns.

SPIRITUALISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

GOD is not a *Spirit*, but "God is Spirit." This is what Jesus of Nazareth declared to the people of his day 1850 years ago. The orthodox renderers of this Scripture passage have as usual mistranslated his words. "God is Spirit" is what he said, and the first light I got myself on this point of the *mistranslation* was one Sunday morning in May, 1881. When just awaking from sleep, some invisible intelligence whispered in my ear these three words, "God is Spirit." Instantly wide awake, I sprang out of bed, rushed for my Greek Testament, turned to the fifth chapter of John's Gospel, and there found the identical words which I had just heard, the literal rendering of these words being The God is Spirit, meaning by "the" the Supreme God.

Now if there is one fact more clearly declared to me by my own investigation into Spiritualism, it is that there is in space in the universe a power or force invisible, directed by an Intelligence itself invisible, respecting both of which human science is utterly ignorant, though they pervade all things in the universe. Several times I have been brought face to face with this power and intelligence (metaphorically speaking), I have felt the power or force at work, and I have heard the words of the Intelligence. Evidence I have as to the fact of that which I asseverate now, not given once only but *repeatedly* at intervals of many months. I have endeavoured on these occasions to scrutinize this power, and the Intelligence directing it, to find out what they really are, but here I am completely baffled. All I know for certain is that this power exists, that the Intelligence directing it also exists, that it is apparently *one* force only, directed by *one* invisible Intelligence. Now, I have in my possession declaratory evidence of a certain kind as to whence this force or power proceeds, and who is the invisible Intelligence directing it, and producing by its means the various phenomena of Spiritualism in the present day. But that secret I shall have to keep to myself, for the present at all events. The world is not yet ready to receive it. Spiritualists, especially those who run after phenomena alone, who care nothing for the beautiful truths underlying the phenomena, who don't care to advance beyond wonders and signs of things hidden from their gaze, wont thank me for divulging the secret just now. They are not ready for anything of the kind, more is the pity that they are not. There is a "glad tidings of great joy" which shall yet be to all people in future ages; but the people of the nineteenth century are not prepared to receive it yet. So as I know when to be silent and when to speak out, I shall for the present be discreet, and say nothing. To me the evidence has come to which I allude, but I cannot make it available. The curse of Materialists would be heaped upon my head if I let the cat which they want to *kill* in their unreason escape out of the bag, and equally virulent would be the maledictions of Spiritualists, orthodox, heterodox, and even Unitarians (who are strangely opposed to Spiritualism) did I say all I know. To a few private friends I declared the truth that is in me, but the old saying has come to pass, "What I have seen and heard that I have testified, but no man will receive my testimony." But though it may not be received now it will be joyfully received hereafter. (I use the word hereafter in a double sense, viz., by posterity on earth, and

by those who remove from earth to the Spirit Land; to these last especially I can with all sincerity and confidence appeal).

In Spiritualism in its higher aspects there is grander truth hidden than even Spiritualists have any idea of. Things there are hidden and secret therein which shall yet be revealed. Phenomena are not the whole of Spiritualism, nor can any comparison be made between Spiritualism in its higher aspects and that which is merely superficial—phenomenal. Spiritualism does not only set all doubt at rest by its scientific facts as to the future life, nor does it only exhibit to us the true nature of that life, but if efforts be made persistently and patiently to penetrate deeper below the surface than Spiritualists care to, it brings us face to face with something else of grander import to humanity than is the knowledge and the assurance that man is immortal only. Such efforts have been made by me, and are still being continued, and I for one am in face of a power or force invisible directed by an Intelligence itself invisible, respecting the very existence of which human science is totally ignorant, because human science is materialistic, and Spiritualism in its lower aspects simply running mad after phenomena without the slightest desire to know anything about the esoteric phenomena of Spiritualism, leading us as they do to an esoteric Spiritualism itself more refined and beautiful than exoteric Spiritualism, which is essentially materialistic too. And when I seek to know more about this invisible power or force, directed by this invisible Intelligence, I can only get as far as the certain and assured knowledge that they are *one* and only one. The force which has often impressed upon me is *one*; the Intelligence directing it is one. Further than that, all is at present baffling inscrutable mystery. There is only one reason why this should be! I may just add that this power and Intelligence exist in space, that is, in the whole universe. It is present everywhere, unseen by all it lives and works as it pleases in various modes. Earnestly have I tried to penetrate the mystery, but unless the declaratory (not *phenomenal*) evidence given to me at various times, coming to me not from any internal sense, but entirely external, at times when I was wide awake, not at all unconscious, be accepted, it would be impossible to lead the people to the conviction that coming from such a source *Spiritualism is true!* I will now only add that had any persons been present on the occasions separated from each other by months to which I allude, when this Intelligence manifested itself in a declaratory way to me, they would have been as astounded as I was at the time. In presence thereof I have stood *amazed, aghast, incredulous*, faith and reason half confounded at the strangeness of the visitations. There are more things in heaven and earth than you dream of in your philosophy, aye, even in Spiritualism itself. Some of these things have been made known to me. With the why and the wherefore I do not much concern myself, knowing that the why and the wherefore will yet appear, but I would venture to appeal most solemnly to all those who have hitherto foolishly opposed Spiritualism, and to say emphatically to all, "Beware what you do in this matter." My own religious views have since these things undergone a great change, still perhaps greater may yet come. From Unitarianism I have advanced to Pantheism, reasoning thus—God is Spirit, *universal*, present everywhere, immanent in all things, in all intelligences throughout the universe. He is no personality, such as we are, but *one* Grand Infinite Universality, *all* and *in all*, immanent in Spirit and in space. The world is not ready to receive this. I shall be denounced and spit upon by all. The pious will brand me as an "Infidel," the "wicked" will call me bad names, and will say, "Thou hast a devil and are mad" to the people everywhere. "Don't listen to him." Such is the penalty of progression! As it was done before to others, so will it do again to me; the world will gape and fume, and utter its maledictions and its impotent laugh at me, but I go on my way "caring for none of these things." The Divine Incarnation is not in one man alone super-eminent above his fellows, but in *all* men if they only knew it. Just now I am among the despised and forsaken, among those at whom

foul-mouthed "orthodoxy" is always railing. But I know what I am about when I say to all, "The reign of the Spirit Universal is at hand," it is drawing nigh, nearer and nearer with every advancing year. This is my Spiritualism, different in much to that which now goes by the name. The present Spiritualism that is now, is—but shaping and forming the Spiritualism which is to be. Foreshadowing the glad tidings of great joy which shall yet be clearly understood by all nations, the Spiritualism of the present day, the ministry of angels, is but the Harbinger of Light to the nineteenth century, the Morning Star preceding the dawn of a grander Spiritualism yet to be, which shall in future ages arise to lead men out of their infancy of ages on to the future progressive states of adolescence, and thereafter fully developed manhood and womanhood, when they shall become as angels on earth, which they are far from being now.

UNITARIAN MINISTER.

Brisbane, March 25th, 1884.

THEOSOPHIC SPIRITUALISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR.—My esteemed friend's (Dr. Rohner) letter challenges my strict attention, which I open with a mild protest against incorrect items in his version of my letter, probably owing to a little slip on my part, for if command of the English language has a share in the misunderstanding, I unhesitatingly bow to my friend's superior skill. Still, a little haste in confiding my statements to memory may account for the points in question, which only for the present annoy me until this letter reaches the readers of the *Harbinger* in London. Although of no grave import *per se*, I deem the correction necessary since the letter, if made known—which publicity I cordially hail as a fine opportunity to bring serious differences to a fair and square discussion—so much needed on the pretended gulf between Calcutta Theosophy and Spiritualism, or, as I may take it, between aristocratic and plebeian philosophy. My safest method of explanation will be to simply restate the interesting experience in question.

When Mrs. Hollis-Billing was in London (three years ago), I was a constant visitor, and enjoyed the amiable hospitality of this most remarkable and refined medium and lady, after impressive manifestations, in a degree, which I must not enlarge on here, else no space would remain for our topic; still, I must emphasise on the pure, truly spiritualistic views which this lady uttered in conversation, and which confirmed the doctrines of Spiritualism proper, alluding to Theosophy merely as a separate school of investigation.

After thus nourishing my own sympathies for Spiritualism by her sincere devotion, how could I but partake in the mental shock she evinced, coming from that séance with Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, at which *I was not present*. I don't undertake to repeat her words, but they amounted to this, recollecting the appropriate expression of features: one does not know what to think, what to believe, in this perplexing problem! Madame Blavatsky assigns the phenomena to will-power only, and sure enough, when I on request expressed a wish what to get, asked for an old china tea-pot to match my set, she bade me put my hand under the table, and the teapot longed for glided into my hand! Then Mr. C. C. Massey desired a note-book with a particular *carte-de-visite* in it, and "go to the lobby and find it in your overcoat," resulted likewise in the gift.

Now, Mrs. Hollis added with increased bewilderment, this all in the course of an ordinary conversation, without a formal séance, together with my implicit faith in Madame Blavatsky, and knowledge that she was not prepared for my desire nor of that of Mr. Massey—we meeting the *first time* there—it is overwhelming! That Mr. Massey returned home a theosophist may be a misconstruction in my memory, or Mrs. Hollis' allusion; but there are the main facts, which will be endorsed by that unique medium, Mrs. Hollis-Billing.

This, however, I have to add, that for a considerable time after this event I continued enjoying my séances and visits there as before, and cannot for the life of me remember how we re-established our equilibrium after this tremendous shake at our philosophical chess-board, which made the queen tumble. But it may interest fellow-gropers in the delightful dark, or dazzling light, how I managed to keep on my legs between wind-gushes of Theosophy and Spiritualism, which I then took for different articles, whilst I at present enjoy and suffer all these different show-tents in the "camp of progress," like I do the separation of music from painting or sculpture, all coming from the same parent; or the colours of the rainbow, radiating from one white light, the sun. I like to go from one tent to the other, sometimes inside, except when clownish trumpeting grates on my ears. All will-power! I mused, after the relief generally felt by a *shift of terms* (as the bag does when sliding from one shoulder to the other). It altered only my confusion, but did not clear it.

When the fourth dimension opened its programme, all rejoiced in landing at the solution; and Prof. Zollner ran a race with me in attempting to make the thing comprehensible, and like children we were satisfied with the amusement of knowing nothing, and we supposed to our benefit on this plane. To preach from this globe the "how" and whereabouts of the universe, is somewhat like an insect proclaiming the structure and dimensions of an elephant from under its tail. Will-power! Does it mean "where there's a will there's a way"? Whose will is master of the situation, and who meddles by *accident* in the workshop of will-manufacturers to the confusion of the foreman? I believe in the adepts; but where and what is their connection between the séances all over the world and in quarters where the dictionary is consulted to explain the word Theosophy? It would appear as if these adepts or epigone god-heads employ agencies on a gigantic system of mystification all over our globe, until a chain of "hands" is formed round the equator which will tilt the earth off from its tramway round the sun. I confess, with all my impudent conceit to think for myself, I like to lean on others in whom I feel confidence by intuition. So I felt one foot already move towards Calcutta, but looked on "M.A." (Oxon.), whose writings guided me essentially in my development, and as I did not see him go, I thought there's something yet amiss, and drew my foot back.

Now permit me some suggestions on the practical points of such stupendous conversation. I believe the teapot was already on the road when Mrs. Hollis went there, and in the room ready for visibility and reality, before a spirit put the question into the brain of Mrs. Hollis, as in allastonishing promptitude of fulfilling a wish—which by the bye cost Lankaster and Donkin their reputation in posterity, for the writing was on the slate before the time allotted, as they suspected and desired. This trapped Slade for a few days, and these poor fraud-spirits for ever. I submit, I may be exposing myself before the superior intellects of Madame Blavatsky or Col. Olcott, but cannot help expressing myself how I think and feel about the claims of Theosophy or the Society thereof. I am certain it does a wonder of good work, but humbly suspect that some of its apostles may be tickled by the mere flattery of being something apart and above plain mortals, a desire which often couples with the laudable instincts for fellowship in any problem, which involves the highest aspirations.

Madame Blavatsky appears to me often as a brilliant star of intellect, chosen by the spirit-world, by her meidumship to interblend the enthusiasm of believing with the stronger zeal and enthusiasm of skepticism, and so draw the scientific world closer to our common ground—Spiritualism. I, in my humble way, succeeded admirably where I avoided in missionary attempts entirely the word Spiritualism, and made use of electricity, hypnotism, and the like, to make the cup palatable. And with a slight dose of contempt for Spiritualists (partly sincere), I made my adversaries Spiritualists on the spot. Fashion is mightier lever than we guess, and the imposing temple of Indian Theosophy will attract thousands who got tired of the usual show. Let us, in conclusion

open a friendly combat between Theosophists and Spiritualists, as we have plenty of "shells." I shall join and throw occasionally my "shells" in the camp of boisterous skeptics for a change. I anticipate with delight further letters on Theosophy in the *Harbinger*.

Yours truly,

C. REIMERS.

THEOSOPHY V. SPIRITUALISM.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE HARBINGER OF LIGHT.

SIR.—With reference to the above letter of my acute friend, C. Reimers, I beg to state that the attempt made in that otherwise interesting and highly suggestive epistle to explain the wonderful facts recorded, namely, the *apport* of the teapot for Mrs. Hollis-Billing, and of the pocket-book with *carte-de-visite* enclosed, does not perfectly satisfy my mind, as it still leaves the further question an open one, viz., did Madame Blavatsky, after having found the necessary tea-pot to match the (ditto) cups of Mrs. Hollis, by will-power, suggest to the celebrated American medium her wish for the tea-pot also, and did C. C. Massey ask for his gift by extraneous suggestion, or by an independent volitional effort of his own? For it would obviously be very easy to procure any kind of *apports* in this manner, by first obtaining the articles wanted, and afterwards by willing the party operated upon to wish for the very identical articles already procured for exhibition. At the same time I may mention, in this connection, that the mysterious crockery exhibition case mentioned in the account of the notorious picnic party in Mr. Sinnett's "Occult World," made exactly the same impression of indefinite statement and logical *lacune*, to be filled up somehow by the readers' imagination, on my mind, and I candidly confess that all I read on the subject since the publication of "Occult World" has not altered my attitude of profound doubt on the *modus operandi* of the theosophic miracles.

With respect to the sheltering and qualifying remark made by Mr. Reimers as to the intentions of Madame Blavatsky, to purify our over credulous Spiritualism by a stiff dose of skepticism, I must simply own that I always looked upon Madame B. as one of the most uncompromising enemies or controversialists that Spiritualism had, or still has, for she stoutly denies that she is a medium, and she persistently calls our spirits *shells*, empty shells, "without any oysters inside," and tells us that we are fools for believing in them. On the other hand, I must most decidedly agree with friend Reimers that in "M.A. (Oxon.)" Spiritualism has a doughty champion, with broad Spiritual shoulders, upon which I would lean 10,000 times rather than on the combined shoulders of our Madame and our Colonel. *Sapienti sat!*

If friend Reimers will kindly continue administering his Theosophy—explaining doses to my difficile mind—*justi et veri tenax*,—I shall be thankful to him for curing a hard-headed doctor (*tres medici duo athei*) of his *faiblesse mentale*.

Yours fraternally,

Benalla, 18th April, 1884.

C. W. ROHNER.

THE SPIRIT OF THE STORM.

"The Transvaal of to-day," by Alfred Aylward, Commandant, Transvaal Republic, is a most excellent book in many respects, especially with regard to the narrative portion of the work, which commenrates the trials and sufferings of the Boers in search for an independent home for their families, and their flight from the harassing persecution of a greedy and utterly perverted English-Colonial policy. Their hardships, as related by Aylward, in many ways resemble the semi-fabulous accounts of the Hebrew exodus and flight from the pursuing hosts of an Egyptian Pharaoh; and their thirty years of harassed travelling from the Cape colony to the high plateau of Orange River and Transvaal, their flights and continuous struggles, not only with Kaffirs and Zulus, but also with English Commissioners and English red coats, represent again, on the other hand, the painful forty years' wanderings of the Israelites through the barren regions of the Sinaitic peninsula.

Aylward, moreover, though an Englishman, takes, in a most decided and manly, courageous manner, the side of the poor and much-persecuted Boers; and his liberality both of thought and sentiment manifest themselves especially in his severe and not undeserving strictures on England's selfish annexation policy, which can apparently suffer no neighbours of any kind, let them be German, Dutch, or French, without being either Britishers or subjects of her Majesty the Queen.

For all these traits of a generous mind I must praise Mr. Aylward; they breathe a genuine air or sentiment of a human fraternity, and of the inherent dignity of all humanity, independent of colour, language, or nationality; but when he comes to deal with matters spiritualistic, as he does in xi. chap. of his work, his ignorance, perversion of judgment, and narrow-mindedness, display themselves as fully as these qualities would show themselves in a leader of Exeter Hall congregations. He represents the Dutch and German settlers as being born with an instinct of superstition and a belief in ghosts, augmented by the abject similar tendencies of the Bushmen, Kaffirs, and Hottentots amongst whom they grow up.

"Last of all," he says in the beginning of this interesting chapter, "there is in the Cape Colony itself (Berks Hutchinson is hit here), a widespread and mischievous belief in modern magic—the Spiritualism of Home and his fellows," and, further on, winds up this false sentiment by confessing that "it is not my intention to go into the vexed question of spirit or no spirit. People can just believe what they like. The wise and good (! !) will doubtless arrive at sound judgments, whilst the foolish and vain (! !), are not likely to be disturbed in their convictions by anything urged by reason (!) or common sense. (!)"

Let now the readers of the *Harbinger* listen to the grave words of this grave assailant of Spiritualism, to the subjoined account of what he terms "The Spirit of the Storm," and they will no doubt find in his latter admissions of things supernatural (!), which he cannot explain, shrewd commandant and soldier though he be, that his conspicuous inconsistency with himself forms the severest verdict against the hasty and immature remarks and judgments passed by him on the believers in the positive phenomena of modern Spiritualism in the opening lines of the chapter in question.

Here, then, follows the ghost story which Aylward himself is able to endorse after having discredited those witnessed and related by others. Aylward's example ought to be a standing warning to all those over-clever and superficial sneers at things spiritual of which, never having studied or investigated them thoroughly and honestly, they cannot be expected to know anything.

"There is another class of ghost or spook with which the Dutch are equally familiar, and with which I can vouch for almost a personal acquaintance."

"A gentleman, who is most intimate with me, was riding one day on a road skirted on the left by high embankments, while the right sloped away into grassy meadows, when a thunderstorm coming up from behind caused him to look back that he might calculate whether he could reach the town, two miles in front of him, without being caught in the rain. The horse, as horses will, looked around and backward at the same time. In a moment the brute was madly plunging, striving to bolt up the high bank, and endeavouring, with evident terror, to get away from some fearful thing. The rider, of course, restrained this impulse with his powerful bit, forcing the animal back into the road and keeping his head in the original direction. The horse was still restive and nervous, glancing occasionally to his right rear, and endeavouring to burst away anywhere off the road to the left. It was four p.m., on an ordinary summer afternoon, when short thunderstorms from the Drakensberg, transitory but violent, are of almost daily occurrence. Strongly interested by the fear so palpably exhibited by his horse, and expecting to see at the worst a wolf, the rider again turned his eyes towards the rapidly approaching rain, which was sweeping towards him like a wall, bending under its weight the tall grass, and not now distant more than 300 yards from his position. He was not a superstitious man (!), he was not drunk, or

RECOLLECTION AND PERSONALITY.

(Concluded from page 2675).

In the somnambulic condition (whether it be spontaneous, or produced by magnetising, or by the action of medical men who are not magnetisers) there are manifested facts and sensations as well in the physical as in the moral order, of which the subject in his or her normal state has no consciousness and no recollection.

Some of these facts are instinctive, it is true, but many of them denote such a rigorous sequence in the actual ideas as to surpass even that which characterises those of the same subjects in their waking hours.

Does the absence of memory in the state of wakefulness, and the solution of continuity in the recollection imply the destruction of personality on the part of the person who experiences it?

If a person having power over a somnambulist orders him to do a certain thing when he awakes, the subject, on regaining that condition will almost infallibly obey the command, although he has no consciousness or recollection of having received it, since he does not even remember that he has been in a state of somnambulism. That this may appear singular I do not dispute, but the singularity of the thing militates in no wise against the authority of the thing itself, for a fact is a fact.

Will it be said, then, that the somnambulic subject receiving the command is not the same person as he who, on awaking, executes it? Now, it sometimes happens that, taking advantage of this natural disposition and order in the effects of somnambulism, medical magnetisers (and whether they call their magnetism by this or by another name matters very little) order the somnambulists submitted to their treatment to take such and such a remedy, towards which, in their waking hours, they have a strong repugnance, and the patients, on awakening, take the remedy. Or else, without giving the order explicitly, they inspire the somnambulists with the resolution to do so, and the subjects, on awakening, carry out that resolution, although they are absolutely ignorant that they ever formed it.

Others again, applying to moral infirmities this method of treatment, give counsels or injunctions, in that moral order, which counsels or injunctions are followed, as in the physical order.

Therefore the solution of continuity in the memory proves nothing against the permanence of the personality. I will go further, and assert that these things, so happening, constitute, if not a certainty, by way of analogy, at any rate a very strong presumption in favour of the spiritualist doctrines previously enunciated.

Furthermore, if, as many reasons lead us to conclude, the somnambulic condition may be considered as the image of the state of the soul after death, the solution of continuity in the recollection and consciousness of the Ego, upon which so much stress is pretended to be laid, is far from being so absolute as, at first sight, it would appear to be.

In effect, if it is complete in the case of the passage from a state of somnambulism to that of waking, it is not equally so in the case of the transition from the waking to the somnambulic condition. And while the thoughts supervening on a state of somnambulism exercise over the acts in a condition of wakefulness only an occult influence, it must be manifest and evident to all that many of the acts of the somnambulic condition are merely the result of designs formed in a state of wakefulness. And this—at any rate so far as the intellectual operations are concerned, is scarcely compatible with the entire solution of continuity in the consciousness and memory of the Ego.

Finally, then, I deduce from the foregoing arguments the following conclusions:—

1. That the solution of continuity in the memory does not necessarily involve the destruction of the personality.
2. That, by consequence, the absence of memory proves nothing against the plurality of existences of the soul, taught by Spiritualism, as also in many other religious and philosophical systems.
3. That certain facts having their origin in somnambulism, whether natural and spontaneous, or induced,

Oh sancta simplicitas!

C. W. ROHNER, M.D.

Benalla, March 23rd, 1884.

furnish a sufficiently serious explanation in themselves of the state of the soul after death.

4. That, by these same facts, the reciprocal influence upon each other of the two conditions—that of incarnation and that of erraticity—is demonstrated to be not only possible, but probable.

5. That reincarnation is, so far as we know at this time, the most rational method of accounting for numerous facts admitted by all schools of Spiritualists and by all religions.

B. BUSSEREAU.

COMMUNICATION.

BICHAT.

"BEFORE Abraham was, I am." Two truths were enunciated in this declaration—the one, the continuity of being, and the other the successive manifestations of the individual in many forms. To God there is neither past, present or future, but an eternal now. As it was in the beginning, so it is in the instant of time which is passing, and in that which shall be for ever and ever. There can be no looking backward or forward with Him who embraces eternity in His vision, and is Himself Infinite. Time and space are conditions of the thing created—of the finite being, and a state of existence in which there is neither time nor space but boundless extension, is inconceivable by the finite mind. How little it knows of the phenomena by which it is surrounded in the world of matter! How slow its growth! How deliberate its progress, even under the most favourable circumstances! It was occupied for ages in acquiring the rudiments of the limited knowledge it possesses. It learned the exercise of its purely physical organs and functions when it was very low down indeed in the scale of animated nature. It passed through multitudes of forms of life, gaining some experiences and some ideas in each. It ascended the ladder of existence slowly and toilfully, step by step, from lower to higher. Centuries went by and found it merely advanced a stage; thousands of years elapsed, and still the upward march was being steadily pursued. There was no haste or precipitation in the process, for "Whatsoever God doeth, He doeth for ever," and his methods are not man's methods. They are gradual, unintermitting, and steadfast. From gas to mineral, from mineral to vegetable, from vegetable to animal, and from animal to man—behold the order of ascension, the scale of promotion, the law of advancement. Out of the dust of the earth was man evolved; by no miracle, for the laws of the Infinite Spirit, the Author and Sustainer of all things, are faultless and infrangible. They admit of no evasion, suspension, or diversion. They partake of His divine perfection. They are His mind in operation. Foreseeing everything He has provided for everything. Those who represent Him as a wonder worker, and miracle-monger, dishonour Him by ascribing to Him human qualities and human defects. Ah! how ignorant are they of His nature and attributes! How incapable of comprehending His sublime power and boundless wisdom, "with Whom there is no variableness, neither the shadow of turning." Yet man, measuring the Infinite by his own finite scale, is capable of supposing that the Most High is variable, capricious, and addicted to the performance of such thaumaturgic exploits as an Egyptian or an Indian conjuror would delight in. Not so, my brother. God works no miracles, in the theological sense of the word. Nothing disturbs, has disturbed, or can by any possibility disturb, the divine order of things. It exists by His appointment, and He knoweth all, directs all to the ends which He has purposed, nor can anything hinder their accomplishment.

When He has spoken to His creatures on this planet of yours, through such channels as He selected for that purpose, He did so in language suitable to the childhood of the race. It was good for the time, and intelligible by those who had then reached a certain stage of growth. He talked to them in parables and allegories, just as the literature of the nursery consists merely of nursery stories and such like fictions. They are good for the time, but in after-life you do not think of accepting them as histories, or as

expositions of scientific fact. Neither should man regard the early Scriptures. A better and a higher teaching was given to the race through Christ. And from age to age, in a variety of ways, and through a multitude of mouthpieces, the Most High reveals Himself to the creatures He has made. To-day he does so by inspiring men to investigate the phenomena and processes of nature, all of which testify of Him. And if some are so blinded by pride and are so thickly enveloped in the folds of materialism that they are unable to discern the formative and informing spirit underlying the fugitive appearances of things, and are disqualified to look below the surface, and perceive the essence and reality of the transitory phenomena they are investigating, the greater is their misfortune, and the more pathetic their spiritual blindness. Yet these also serve Him, although involuntarily. For they examine, reveal, and explain His laws, for the benefit of those who are at once less instructed and less blind than themselves. Nature is His garment. It is the apparel in which He clothes His ideas. The more closely it is studied, the more clearly does it manifest His omnipotence, His omniscience, and His loving kindness to those who have eyes to see, and ears to hear, and an understanding to comprehend His infinite wisdom and goodness. "Go to the ant and learn wisdom," was the admonition of a wise man of old. It is as valid to-day as it was two thousand years ago. There is not an insect that crawls, not a flower that blows, that will not repay the most minute and reverential study. Men go into ecstasies over a work of art, but howsoever beautiful and admirable this may be as the product of human genius, that is to say of inspiration from a higher source, how weak and poor even the highest art by comparison with the grandeur and loveliness of nature. What picture could ever present anything more than a dim reflection and muddy transcript of the glories of sunrise and sunset? What colour can imitate the transparent azure of the sky, or the lustrous purple of the Mediterranean? What pencil can depict the ineffable beauty of light? what chisel could mimic the mountain-sculptures of the Andes or the Himalayas? No! nature is above all art, and the noblest conceptions of human genius sink into insignificance when they are brought into competition with the best of God's works. And the study of these, when he is clearly discerned in all, is a form of religion which will spread more and more, as the human mind, in the course of its slow development, becomes more and more accessible to the light of nature, which is an illumination by the Divinity. Men's conceptions of God will become less anthropomorphic, and broader and grander, in proportion as they understand "the things that are made," and obtain glimpses of the invisible—or "things that do not appear" within and behind the external phenomena apprehensible by the senses. Recognising the unity and universality of the Divine Law in all the phenomena of nature, human beings will be filled with deeper feelings of veneration and gratitude towards the Lawgiver; they will be less disposed to transgress His commandments, and better qualified to understand that these were instituted to ensure the happiness of His creatures, and that by obedience to them man will advance his own welfare and progress, and those of his fellow creatures, from whom he cannot dissociate himself.

PROPHETS AND PROPHECIES.*

THIS work is from the pen of a French medium—a lady—who adopts the *nom de plume* of "Hab," a contraction of the word Habimelah, a name she is said to have borne in a previous incarnation, when she was contemporary with Moses, and belonged to the "chosen people." The first part of the book is devoted to the prophecies of former and of comparatively recent times, including some which predicted the great French Revolution and its horrors some few years before it actually occurred. In the second, we have a number of communications given through the medium from spirits bearing or

* "Prophéties et Prophecy." Edit par la direction de la Lémidié. Paris; 75 Boulevard Montmorency.

assuming very august names. Of course these are in capable of verification, but it must be said of them that they breathe a very exalted spirit, and are penetrated by the purest morality. The work is issued from the office of *La Lumière*, a Spiritualistic journal, which is published every fortnight under the editorship of Madame Eugénie Grange, and is doing good work in combating the deplorable and degrading materialism which is the malady of our epoch, and is particularly virulent in France. In explanation of the fact that so many of the communications are subscribed by such illustrious spirits, "Hab" writes as follows: "All the elevated spirits have transmitters who are permitted to take the name of him whom they represent, and with whom they are identified. Each truth transmitted runs the risk of alteration in descending the gradual scale of which the summit is in God and the base in the abysses, and if the transmitters are placed hierarchically in the fluidic order, so are their instruments and auxiliaries the mediums. "And if the latter are physically or morally imperfect, or mentally inadequate, it necessarily follows that the communication is liable to be faultily conveyed.

Light for February 23rd contains accounts of two remarkable test seances with W. Eglington by a Barrister-at-law, and E. Dawson Rogers, and the chapters on phases of Materialisation by M. A. (Oxon) now appearing in its columns are deeply interesting.

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